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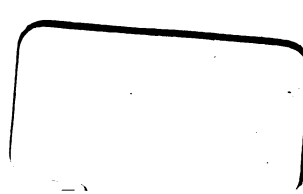

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THE

WORKS

OF THE

CALEDONIAN BARDS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE

GALIC,

By JOHN CLARK, F. S. A. Scot.

SECOND EDITION.

EDINBURGH:
Printed for T. CADELL LONDON,
AND,
C. ELLIOT, EDINBURGH.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN the following poems firſt made their appearance, the Tranſlator was greatly aſtoniſhed to hear that ſome doubts were entertained with reſpect to their authenticity, by perſons who were ſtrangers to the language which contained the originals. No other objections, however, could have given him ſo little uneaſineſs, as none could have been ſo eaſily removed.

To reſign his pretenſions to thoſe foibles, and that weakneſs which he inherits as one of the human race, would be laying claim to a ſuperior degree of inſenſibility, which the Tranſlator of theſe poems neither pretends to poſſeſs, nor wiſhes to acquire. He, therefore, very frankly acknowledges, that, if the poems in his poſſeſſion had really been his own compoſition, he would find it a difficult matter to prevail

vail on his vanity to reſign the merit of them to a claſs of authors, whoſe mouldering aſhes would regard, with equal indifference, the loudeſt acclamations of applauſe, or the detracting whiſpers of the keeneſt cenſure.

Their authenticity, however, remains no longer a matter of doubt. Although the Tranſlator could by no means reliſh the compliments paid to his ingenuity at the expence of his integrity, by ſome of his neighbours in South Britain, who inſinuated that he himſelf was the *original* author; yet he did not think it prudent to enter into a literary controverſy with anonymous writers. The Rev. Mr William Shaw, however, at length appeared againſt him, and having prefixed his name to his animadverſions, afforded the Tranſlator an opportunity of producing vouchers for the exiſtence of the originals.—The merits of that controverſy

are

are too well known to require any illuſtration here.

The Tranſlator now reſigns them for ever to their fate.—Having ſufficiently removed every ſuſpicion with reſpect to his *veracity*, he is little—very little, concerned with regard to his reputation as an *author*. The innocent foibles of youth which prompted him to enter the field of literature are now over; nor did his vanity lead him to prefix his name to the work, until he ſaw it attacked in public as a forgery. To have ſcreened himſelf longger behind the curtain, would ſavour of puſillanimity; and to have deſerted a truth which he was able to defend, would merit a more ungracious appellation. He hopes, however, in future, to direct his attention to objects more beneficial to the public and himſelf.

To

TO

George Buchan-Hepburn,

OF SMEATON, Esq;

SIR,

A Warm and disinterested attachment to the antiquities of my native country, first induced me to undertake the following translations: A simular impulse of gratitude and esteem now prompts me to address the work to you. A consciousness of integrity, however, was not sufficient to fortify me against a melancholy reflection which has often obtruded its humiliating image on the reluctant mind, that dedications in general are viewed in a light not altogether favourable to their authors.

But an occurrence has lately happened, which effectually relieves me from every scruple of that nature. Before this reaches you, I shall be in a quarter

quarter of the globe where your intereſt cannot advance mine, and where thoſe animating beams of friendſhip, which have ſo often cheared me on this ſide of the Atlantic, can no longer reach me.

Permit me, then, Sir, as the laſt favour which I ſhall probably have an opportunity of aſking from you, to place the juvenile offspring of my ſolitary hours under your protection. By this requeſt, I am only adding to a burden which I ought to have diminiſhed. But the appearances of objects depend on the light in which they are viewed, and the genius of different ages may vary. That littleneſs of mind, which gives birth to national prejudice, may yet ſhrink abaſhed before the liberal ſunbeams of approaching years.

When the cruſhing wheels of miſtaken policy have accompliſhed their final triumph over the language, ſpirit,

and

and genius of the Highlanders, the preſent work will probably be glanced over as a fragment relative to the manners of a people who *have been.* It will then perhaps give no diſpleaſure to your deſcendants to be informed, that the Tranſlator of theſe poems was encouraged by the countenance, improved by the learning, and protected by the generoſity of one of their anceſtors; and that the preſent addreſs was adopted, not as the moſt proper, but as the only method left him of acknowledging a debt which he could never hope to pay. I am, with ſincere eſteem and affection,

SIR,

Your much obliged, and moſt faithful humble ſervant,

Edin. June 10. 1783.

JOHN CLARK.

PREFACE.

A MIND, eager to examine the appearance of nature in her ſimpleſt garb, and ſollicitous to contemplate the extent of her power, without the aid of art, muſt enjoy a rational pleaſure from the poetical compoſitions of the Celtic bards. No ſet of men ever diſplayed greater knowledge of the avenues which lead directly to the heart. They firſt arrived at eminence, by the exertion of ſuperior talents; and the induſtry with which they cultivated the human mind ſoon rendered the order venerable. They maintained their exalted ſtation on principles, of which the voice of reaſon and philoſophy moſt approve. They did not terrify weak minds into the belief of prepoſterous hypotheſes, which they could not demonſtrate, nor overawe the populace, by pretending to have intercourſe with oracles, and being the favourites of any divinity. Their aim was to fill the minds of their

A hearers

hearers with great and liberal ſentiments; to make them enamoured of heroiſm; and to inſpire their hearts with that generous love to mankind, which conſtitutes the happineſs and dignity of human nature.

Modern œconomy, however, ſeems to entertain a very different opinion of the merits of the bards, and repreſents them as a ſet of uſeleſs, lazy vagrants, who ſubſiſted on the induſtry of others; and aſſures us, we have little reaſon to regret the extinction of their order. But this is not the only caſe where the voice of cenſure has advanced aſſertions in the face of facts, and directly oppoſite to the principles of fair reaſoning.

The warmeſt advocates for the perfections of human nature, will readily allow, that the heart of man ſtill requires ſome cultivation; and, although a proper field for nouriſhing, will not, of its own accord, produce certain plants. Conſcious of this truth, mankind have, in all ages, contributed towards the ſupport of individuals, who were ſuppoſed

poſed to be wiſer than the reſt, for the purpoſe of improving the heart. Theſe have generally extended their influence, not in proportion to their own abilities, but the weakneſs of their conſtituents; and few of them, like the Celtic bards, have lived up to the tenets they profeſſed; for no inſtance can be found of one of theſe aſpiring to wealth or power, but have, on all occaſions, expreſſed the keeneſt contempt for every other gratification, but that of inſpiring their patrons with magnanimity, and their countrymen with heroiſm. Living thus beyond the reach of corruption, their compoſitions are the genuine offspring of their untainted minds; and, though now dragged from their antient dignity, they have left monuments behind them, ſufficient to proclaim their former ſplendor.

The common people in the Highlands of Scotland are, at this day, endowed with a poetical taſte for nervous compoſition, far ſuperior to that ſubſiſting among the ſame claſs of men in any other nation of Europe, with

with all the boasted refinements introduced by the propagation of learning in later ages. Locked up for many centuries in an unfertile corner of an island, and, by the locality of their language, deprived of all intercourse with the rest of mankind, modern improvement can lay no claim to the establishment of this poetical taste. To account for it, by ascribing to the Highlanders talents superior to their southern brethren, might savour of rashness, presumption, and partiality; but, to attribute this advantage to the superiority of their language, is asserting, what I hope convincingly to prove, by occasional remarks annexed to these poems.

The majesty, and beautiful energy of the Galic, appear no where so conspicuous, as when a translation of the compositions it contains is attempted. While the original poems found among the Highlanders are rehearsing before us, the mind is captivated by the interesting scenes described. The subject is wrapped up in those

thoſe agreeable and pathetic terms, which dart, with irreſiſtible force, upon the minds of the hearers. All the powers of attention are rouſed. Every contemplating faculty is collected into one point, and rendered incapable to act on any ſubject which is not immediately connected with the preſent ſenſations of the heart. The mind, thus pre-engaged, is not at liberty to make a minute inquiry concerning the cauſes from whence theſe agitations flow.

This is one reaſon why the natives of the Highlands are high paſſioned, raſh, and ungovernable in their tempers. The images of objects are painted in colours ſo glowing, that, when diſagreeable, the mind loſes all command. Even when a Highlandman has long reſided in the low countries, early habit leads him to think in Galic; and, ſuch is the energy and force of this language, that he often breaks out into a rage, at circumſtances which appear perfectly trifling, when ſpoken or conceived in Engliſh. But, when a tranſlator attempts

to

to delineate theſe ſentiments in any other language, he will find them ſtripped of ſo many comprehenſive terms, and poetical flowers, peculiar to the Galic, that the peruſal of them muſt be in danger of diſguſting thoſe who are acquainted with the originals.

The antient poems ſtill extant in the Galic, exhibit a picture of the Caledonians ſo different from that given them in hiſtory, that one could ſcarcely imagine them to be the ſame people, if the manners and cuſtoms alluded to in theſe poems did not ſubſiſt at this day among the Highlanders. The tranſactions of the weſtern nations, beyond a certain period, are wrapped up in a miſty veil, which the breath of modern criticiſm has, in vain, endeavoured to expel. This cloud, however, was not altogether, as hath been generally imagined, a conſequence of their being deſtitute of the uſe of letters. This defect, though material, their language was amazingly calculated to ſupply; and, had they not been cruſhed by the ſuperior

ſuperior cunning of aſpiring tyrants, there is great reaſon to conclude, that the introduction of literature would have met with ſeveral oral regiſters kept with great exactneſs, by which their account of themſelves might be traced back for an incredible ſpace of time. The purity with which the poems of Oſſian, Morguth, Deal, and many other bards, both in Scotland and Ireland, have been handed down to our own days, are ſufficient to ſupport the truth of this aſſertion.

The Celtic language was conſtructed on principles the beſt calculated for preſerving as well as deſcribing events. Every accent ſtruck with ſuch force upon the mind, that the memory had little trouble in retaining a compoſition of great length, and of rehearſing the ſame after the firſt or ſecond hearing. Had this language then been cultivated with the ſame degree of induſtry that has been beſtowed on others far leſs capable of anſwering the intended purpoſes, mankind might have enjoyed ſeveral advantages to which they are now ſtrangers. The

drudgery

drudgery of the ſchools might have been performed with half the preſent labour, and the ſtudy of each ſcience would have become more expeditious.

It is aſtoniſhing, that an event ſo remarkable as that of expelling the language of their anceſtors, and adopting that of the Saxons, by the King and Court of Scotland, ſhould be totally overlooked by the hiſtorians of that nation. It admits of no doubt, however, that this muſt have happened during the reign of Malcolm Canmore. He is the laſt king of Scotland whoſe name is ſignificant in the Galic. All before him are ſo, as far as genuine hiſtory reaches. The influence of his Queen, Margaret, at a court where ſhe herſelf was the chief ornament, was ſucceſsfully exerted to render her language faſhionable. The flower of the Engliſh, who had fled from the conqueror, ſhared the diſtreſſes, and now taſted the good fortunes of Margaret, could not fail of ſeconding theſe efforts. The Saxon language ſoon became general along the eaſtern coaſt of

of Scotland; which lands, we are informed, Malcolm beſtowed on the followers of his Queen. They ſtepped into the firſt offices in the kingdom, ſpread their own language among their domeſtics and adherents, and baniſhed the Galic to the unfertile mountains, where it has hitherto maintained its exiſtence with ſurpriſing fortitude, notwithſtanding the various ſchemes, practiſed of late, for its final deſtruction.

We can advance nothing with certainty concerning what period many of the following poems have been compoſed. Had the Highlanders, like other nations, been accuſtomed to admit the religious opinions of the times into their works, modern inquiry might have been directed to form tolerable notions concerning the different æras in which their authors lived. But this never was, nor could, with propriety, be expected to be the caſe. When the Galic language was in the meridian of its ſplendor, the Chriſtian religion was altogether unknown to the Celtic nations; and, ſince it hath been introduced a-

mongſt them, their own language has been much on the decline. This accounts for the extreme meanneſs to which every poem, on religious ſubjects, ſinks in the Galic. Although a compoſer may be furniſhed in that language with a luxuriant richneſs of nervous expreſſions, when war, love, or paſtoral poetry is the theme, if he change it to religion, he will find his ſubject dreſſed in a garb of meanneſs, from which he will in vain endeavour to reſcue it by the moſt ſtrenuous exertion of all his powers. It is no wonder then, that bards of great parts have ſedulouſly avoided a ſubject, for which their language could furniſh them with no terms. So little mention is made of religion, that the poems compoſed before and after the introduction of Chriſtianity, are not to be diſtinguiſhed, except ſome pieces which have been compoſed during the two laſt centuries, which greatly partake of that narrowneſs of mind, and thoſe illiberal ſentiments which diſtinguiſh the enthuſiaſtical fanatics of theſe times, from whom the Highlanders borrow-

ed

of ſuch mean and contemptible notions of religion.

But, although the Celtic nations embraced the Romiſh religion, and adopted all their terms, as they had none of their own, ſtill they were loath to relinquiſh their favourite FLATHINNIS, or *Happy Iſle*, in the weſtern ſea, where the ghoſts of their fathers were ſaid to reſide: 'Where,' ſays Morguth, 'the bright ſun of heaven de-'ſcends each night, in all the majeſty of 'his flaming beauty, to chear the warriors 'of old. There he ſits in his hall of ſplen-'dor. No oaks burn within; no ſurly blaſt 'wanders without. The giver of the morn-'ing warms all with his preſence. The 'ghoſts of our fathers hearken to his tale 'from the land of hills. By times they 'hear of their ſons, and liſten with ears of 'attention. Pleaſant are the looks of the 'aged, when their children are mentioned 'with the ſons of fame. But, when they 'fly from their foes, the ſouls of their fathers 'are ſad; they hide their dim heads with 'ſhame,

'ſhame, and fly from the preſence of the 'ſun of heaven.'

Frequent deſcriptions of this nature ſeem to have realized in the minds of the Celtae this FLATHINNIS. No wonder, then, that they were reluctant to eraze from their breaſts all remembrance of a place which their bards had taught them to conſider as their eternal home. To be deprived of that happineſs which fancy had promiſed them there, which the bards had deſcribed with a falacious kind of demonſtration, entirely to reſign all pretenſions to that paradiſe, where the ghoſts of their fathers were ſuppoſed to have gone before them, was not conſiſtent with that paternal fondneſs which the human mind has, in all ages, diſcovered for the firſt principles which ſuperſtition imprints on the heart. Heaven, as deſcribed by the firſt propagators of Chriſtianity, they imagined, correſponded, in ſeveral reſpects, with their own FLATHINNIS; and it is reported by tradition, that they would liſten to no accounts of any other place of happineſs

happineſs than that in which they were informed their fathers reſided. However that be, it is certain, that heaven has no other name in the Galic to this day, than that of this imaginary iſland; and, what renders this the more remarkable, there is perhaps no other term reſpecting religion, in the Galic, that is not literally borrowed from ſome other language.

It was propoſed at firſt to enter more minutely into a compariſon of both languages in the notes; but ſeveral gentlemen objected to the inſerting any part of the original, as uſeleſs to the Engliſh reader, for whoſe benefit alone this work was publiſhed. At their deſire, therefore, theſe critical remarks will be annexed to the originals of theſe poems, which it is propoſed to publiſh ſoon, as ſome of theſe pieces have been collected from the mouths of perſons now living in the Highlands, and have not yet been printed in the Galic, owing principally to the ſmall demand for books in that dialect.

The

The preſent tranſlation was undertaken, with a view to reſcue from the ruins of a periſhing language, ſome of thoſe poems which have met with univerſal applauſe from the people for whoſe uſe they were compoſed. To theſe the Britiſh nation is indebted for that martial ſpirit, which the inhabitants of that part of the iſland have diſplayed in many of her conteſts. The Galic bards uniformly inculcate two material principles in the human heart; Never to forſake a friend, nor fear a foe.

Thoſe who are acquainted with the originals, will no doubt be ſurpriſed that the tranſlator has paſſed over compoſitions of greater merit than thoſe inſerted in this volume. But, as he has often been compleatly mortified, on comparing his own verſions with the originals, he was deſirous of knowing the judgment of the public concerning his manner of executing theſe tranſlations. If he ſhall be ſo happy as to meet with their approbation, he will proceed with more ſpirit to the tranſlation of thoſe poems

of

of a loftier nature. But, if their ſentiments ſhall coincide with his own, in conſidering them as inimitable in an Engliſh verſion, he will readily deſiſt from the undertaking, and reſt ſatisfied with having exerted every effort in his power, in vain, to reſcue from oblivion the venerable compoſitions of the CALEDONIAN BARDS.

INTRO-

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION.

HAIL, oral offspring of the human breath,
Smooth piercing accents, gift of bounteous heav'n!
Without thy friendly aid the breaſt of man
Would burſt with the big load of fetter'd thought.
Nor voice of tale could e'er ſalute his ear,
Nor ſong hiſtoric fraught with warlike deeds.
The fertile boſom of the heavenly bard
Had been the parent and the grave of ſongs.
Mens ſons had never heard the deeds of old;
Nor wiſh'd to live in breath of midnight tale.
Had the tongue mutely roll'd within his mouth,
Man's life, inſipid, had unnotic'd paſs'd,
And been to non-exiſtence much allied.
Then, to the firſt of Powers, whoſe mighty art
Eſtabliſh'd commerce 'twixt the heart and tongue;
To Him, who, from the feeble force of ſound,
Brought accents piercing as the pointed ſteel;
Who form'd the tongue obedient to the will,
Be the firſt offspring of that Will addreſt.
Fir'd with the greatneſs of the liberal gift,
Which he enjoys above the other ſons
Of nature, who traverſe the ſpreading fields,

The grateful of the race of man shall bend,
In adoration bow the knee to HIM,
From whom the riches of all bounty flow.
Yet, thou penurious, mercenary son
Of narrow soul! my words seem strange to thee.
Thou never felt one animating ray
Of gratitude to HIM who cloath'd the fields,
And fill'd the waves with riches for thy use.
Thy darken'd soul no harmony can reach.
On thee the sun-beams roll in vain at noon.
His strength, his kindness, he exerts in vain,
To thaw the feelings of thy frozen heart.—
Thou miscreant! stop the venom of thy breath,
Nor frown so surly on my simple song.
Its fire attempts not to dissolve thy breast.
Listen not to themes you cannot understand,
Nor censure sentiments you never knew.
But thou, O feeling heart, sweet plant of light!
Image of HIM to whom the nations kneel!
To thee, with reverence, I address my song:
To thee I look with expectation's eye,
And earnest wish for approbation's nod;
And where thy purer breath shall mark me wrong,
I'll stand corrected, and receive my doom.
If thus, divided in their various minds,

The

The different hearers of my tale ſhould ſtand;
The frowns of one as earneſt I deſire,
As I petition for the other's ſmile.——
O thou eternal Parent of all pow'r!
Who will'd to being thy unnumber'd worlds,
Who but thyſelf can ſhow the hidden ſprings
From which the meaneſt of thy works proceeds?
Reflecting man, with admiration, feels
His pow'r to publiſh, or conceal his thoughts.
The organs which perform this wond'rous taſk,
In cloſs attendance wait upon his will.
His words the hearers ear uninjur'd pierce,
And tell his breaſt the purport of their flight.
The pow'r of ſound, an unexhauſted ſource!
Has furniſh'd various languages for man.
Theſe all addreſs the heart in diff'rent tones,
As nations varied under which they grew.
One breathes majeſtic in a Homer's ſong,
And draws the battle like the painter's bruſh.
Virgil, with art, has dreſs'd another's brow
With flowers, whoſe blooming luſtre ne'er ſhall fade.
And thou, O Mother of the Galic muſe!
Have I injur'd thee, thus to name thee laſt?
Perhaps I have; and, wert thou known like theſe,

My

My want of judgment had been juſtly blam'd.
But ſay, thou parent of the Celtic ſong!
How comes thy beauties thus to lie conceal'd?
Has no ſweet, bold, poetic ſon of thine,
Held forth thy richneſs in luxuriant ſtrains?
Haſt thou in vain diſplay'd thy breaſt, adorn'd
With the inviting charms of rhet'ric's pow'r;
And has thy children, of perception void,
With ſtupid looks beheld thee thus unmov'd?
Interrogation's words are juſt and ſtrong;
But feeble are the anſwers we can make.
In vain, alas! we tell the ſtranger's ſons,
Whoſe eyes cannot behold thy dazzling light,
That bards have ſung, and hearers dropt a tear,
As the ſong pierc'd into the hardeſt heart:
That gloomy brows have ſoften'd at the ſound;
Inſenſibility has fled, and left
The nobleſt paſſions ruling in the heart.
Thus we, in vain attempt, in borrowed words,
To draw aſide the veil that keeps thee hid,
And ſhew thee to admiring eyes, array'd
In beauty, ſtrength, and majeſty ſublime.
But thou our efforts baffles all with ſcorn,
And frowns ſeverely on the fooliſh bard,
Who ſtrives to dreſs thee in another garb.

She,

She, whom the feeble ſong thus ſerenades,
Was once admir'd, and ſpoke by nations great.
Inſpir'd by her ſweet notes, great chiefs and kings
Gain'd fame immortal in the Celtic ſtates.
Her breath gave laws to Europe's ſpacious plains.
Beneath her ſpreading wings, a martial race!
The warlike ſons of Gaul were known to fame.
In time her multiplying tribes encreas'd;
Too great their bulk for continental bounds.
Then rais'd our fathers, with adventu'rous hand,
The ſpreading ſail, and ſeiz'd the paſſing blaſt,
By whoſe impetuous breath, with flying ſpeed,
They paſs'd the high-ſwell'd boſom of the waves
To Britain's iſle. With liberty they rang'd
Along th' extended plains, and riſing brows
Of hills, that rudely rear their lofty heads
Above the duſky clouds of ſailing miſt,
That travel round the ſea-girt, cliffy coaſt.
There flouriſh'd long, before the ſcribing art
Was known, to place their deeds upon record.
Before them Nature ſpread, with liberal hands,
The choiceſt riches of the annual crop.
Man taſted, unreſtrain'd by pride or pow'r,
The bleſſings which were giv'n for him to know.

Such

Such was the caſe, e'er property aſſum'd
Her ſelfiſh claim to all the fertile plains,
Which heav'n had granted for the uſe of man.
O fatal foe to human nature's race!
Deſtructive gratitude! that firſt taught men
To bend, with reverence, to the worthleſs ſon
Of him who glow'd with patriotic zeal!
In vain they hop'd the father's worth would live,
And raſhly plac'd him on the ſeat of pow'r.—
Deluded croud! your offspring long ſhall mourn,
In bonds and miſery, the haſty deed:
Tyrannic chiefs will wield oppreſſion's rod,
And your ſons ſink beneath that pow'r you gave.
Fain would the ſtruggling efforts of the bard
Purſue a theme more ſmooth, leſs hoſtile words,
And, in perſuaſive accents, raiſe the ſong
To thoſe whoſe ſeveral beauties fire his breaſt.—
Daughters of Babel! by whoſe oral aid
The numerous ſons of Adam have convey'd
Their inward feelings, whether real or forg'd,
Thro' various organs to the kindred mind:
Think not I aim to ſing, with breath profane,
In ſtrains detractive of the high renown
Of you, bright meſſengers of mutual thought,
Whoſe never abſent help conveys, with ſpeed,

Each

Each various wiſh, with eaſe from breaſt to breaſt.
One of your number has experienc'd woe,
And ſtruggl'd long beneath the frowns of fate.
Dragg'd from her antient greatneſs, now ſhe lurks
In cliffy corners of the Britiſh iſles.
If beauty in diſtreſs ſhould urge my ſigh,
Or warm my breaſt beyond permitted bounds,
Think not your merit has unnotic'd paſs'd:
My eyes are open alſo to your charms.
Come, ghoſts of bards, who ſung among the heath
Of Morven's woody hills, on Albian ſhore!
Say, whether would you wiſh your ſong to fall,
And walk majeſtic to the arms of death,
Array'd in beauty, elegance, and ſtrength;
Or, would you condeſcend to have it ſtript
Of that ſublimity in which it ſhines,
And, dreſt in mean attire, a ſimple tale
Depriv'd of numbers, energy, and ſound,
Permit its import to be told to thoſe,
Who cannot view it in its priſtine ſtate?
Conſent, great ſhades! and I, with ſacred awe,
Will look into the treaſures ye have left,
Mourn as I view that height I cannot reach,
And ſigh thoſe beauties which I cannot tell.

Come,

Come, then, Britannia's voice of modern days!
Come, and, with generous frankneſs known to few,
Aſſiſt, while in thy mirror I diſplay,
And trace the beauties of thy rival's face;
That men may know the conqueſt thou haſt made,
And view her ſtrength who ſank beneath thy arm.
Not ſmall the vict'ry—heavenly were her charms!
And tho' ſhe fell, ſhe juſtly claims a tear.

MORDUTH.

MORDUTH*,

AN ANTIENT

HEROIC POEM.

IN THREE BOOKS.

BOOK I.

ART thou on the wings of thy ſpeed, O wind? Doſt thou travel with all thy ſtrength? Come in mildneſs to the cave of my reſt, O breath of the north! My ſtrength is with

* The accounts which tradition gives of the author of this poem, are various. Some aſſert that he was a chief, whoſe territories lay to the north of the Grampian hills, towards the eaſtern coaſt. Others affirm, that he was bard to Morduth, King of the Caledonians. Another party maintain, that he was family-bard to the unfortunate houſe of Dunairn, whoſe hiſtory he has introduced into the preſent poem. But, although they differ in their accounts of his ſtation, they all agree that his name was Douthal; and the induſtry with which his compoſitions have been handed down, are ſufficient to ſhow the veneration which they entertain for his memory.

with the years that have flown: My friends are with the tenants of the tomb. I ſit lonely in my cave of woe, in the days of my feeble years. Leave thy wrathful ſtorms behind thee, when thou rolleſt over my rocks, thou haſty blaſt!

My ſpeed on the hills was once like thine, O wind! my ſtrength as the rocks of Cruival. The ghoſts of my foes wander on many hills: The marks of my ſteel is in many battles. But thou, perhaps, like me, wilt ſome time mourn thy departed ſtrength, and wander with ſlow ſteps on the hills. Thou wilt then in vain endeavour to drive thy hundred clouds before thee. The foreſt that now bends at thy approach, will laugh, when thou deſireſt the haughty oaks to bow their branchy heads before thee. Even the feeble heath will ſcorn thy ſtrength. Come, then, in friendſhip to my gray hairs, O wind; for the days of thy own feeble years approach.

Lay down the bow, and kindle the oaks, hunter of Corri; * the courſe of night is towards

* Corri is one of the many ſignificant terms in the Galic which the Engliſh is incapable of admitting in a tranſlation.

wards us. The ſun trembles in the weſt. The iſle of his ſleep † has three times opened wide its gates, and cried, 'Come in all thy flaming 'beauty, O ſun!'

The

tion. Concavities of one or two miles in diameter, are frequently to be ſeen in the face of ſome large ranges of mountains. The ſprings which iſſue from three ſides of this concavity, always meet about the center, where the junction of ſo many rivulets forms a little ſtream, which is afterwards joined by other rivulets from both ſides, till it arrives at the bottom of the mountains from which it collects the waters. Then the hollow through which the river paſſes, is called a *Glen*. But the face of the hills, to which it owes its birth, is called *Corri*.

† The ſun was ſuppoſed to ſleep in Flathinnis; or, *the Iſle of Peace*, in the weſtern ocean. As nature rejoices or grieves according as this celeſtial body beſtows or withholds its ſmiles; an ambition of which the human mind ſeems, in no age, to be defective, induced the Celtæ to ſend the ghoſts of their departed friends to this imaginary paradiſe. To make HERE happy, by reflecting on the proſpect of HEREAFTER, is a conſolation at which mankind have eagerly graſped, in all ages and nations. Various are the appearances under which the imagination has repreſented this happineſs. But, when the moſt perfect delineations of it are minutely examined, well may we exclaim at the end, 'Tis but to know how little can be known.'—Tho' we have, at laſt, obtained an infal-

lible

The clouds of night hide their dark heads behind the eastern hills. By times they look forth from their hidden caves, and watch the departure of the broad-faced king of the sky. Put on your wings of speed, ye clouds, and come forth. The ghosts of a hundred heroes prepare a bed for your bright * foe in the Isle of Peace.

Bleft

ble system of religion, and have as much communicated to us as was judged proper or necessary for us to know, occasional inquiries into the notions of our ancestors, on so interesting a subject, will not, perhaps, be deemed altogether impertinent. These inquiries, at this distance of time, cannot be expected to be altogether satisfactory. The glimmering light by which they are directed, is only to be gathered from the remains of antient poetry, which consists rather in allusions to, than any descriptions of religion, as the bards never wrote professedly on that subject.

* The sun is frequently called the *Foe of Night* in antient poetry. The joy which the ghosts, in this imaginary isle, were said to express, when he descended from the sky, shewed a great extent of imagination. It was supposed that the ghosts of the most courageous warriors sat next him; but those who had been cowards in their lifetime, were kept at the extremities of the island. We do not, however, hear of any other punishment inflicted on them, than that of being kept at a distance from the sun.

The

Bleſt be the fair maid of thy love, O hunter; unerring be the arrow of thy bow! Thou comforteſt

The Highlanders, accuſtomed to hear the bold, lofty, and elegant compoſitions of their bards on this ſubject, were not a little aſtoniſhed, about the beginning of the preſent century, when one of thoſe popular preachers, who are ſaid to have reformed mankind, attempted to eſtabliſh a very different hypotheſis; and poſitively affirmed, in a ſermon, that the ſun was the place mentioned in ſcripture, as appointed for the reception of the damned.

When the common people in the north are any ways puzzled about ſeeming improprieties, in matters of religion, ſome of their reſpectable teachers ſent them from the ſouth, find a very ſhort, but ſubſtantial ſolution to ſuch difficulties. They ſometimes tell theſe people, that their ignorance, and want of penetration, is the reaſon which makes it appear ſo to them. That theſe matters have been minutely examined by the wiſe part of mankind, who have all agreed in it; and that they themſelves are the only perſons in the world who entertain a doubt of it. That the reſt of mankind, in compaſſion to their ignorance, have raiſed an immenſe ſum of money, to be applied for the purpoſe of opening their eyes; and conclude, with complimenting themſelves, as the favourite veſſels choſen to put theſe pious reſolutions in execution.

That an immenſe ſum was raiſed for this laudable purpoſe, is a fact which every native of that country will acknowledge, with the warmeſt overflowings of gratitude.

But

forteſt me in my tottering age.—But ſit thou down in my cave, and let the rocks contend with the wind. I will tell thee of warriors who are now no more; of heroes who ſleep within the ſilent tomb.

Pleaſant

But the offended feelings of the more penetrating part of them are juſtly rouſed, when they reflect, that this money is applied to purpoſes very different from thoſe intended by the generous donors.

That the ſuppreſſion of vice, and promotion of virtue, is the aim of the *Society for propagating Chriſtian Knowledge, &c.* can admit of no doubt. That they have proved themſelves deſtitute of abilities to put their good intention in execution, is an aſſertion, which, I am ſorry to ſay, is ſupported by truth. Theſe gentlemen ſeem to have entertained ſtrange notions of the Highlanders. They imagined that the moſt ignorant men whom they could collect from the dregs of the people, well enough qualified to eſtabliſh any ſyſtem of religion among the mountaineers. Magnifying their own conſequence, and entertaining an unſufferable degree of contempt for the intellects of the people they were about to reform, they have rendered themſelves ridiculous to the intelligent part of mankind, and injured the cauſe they meant to advance. The converts to the Roman Catholic perſuaſion, are becoming every day more numerous. The reaſon is obvious. Their prieſts are all men of a liberal education, and generally of extenſive knowledge. Men, verſed in all the ſophiſtry of argumentation,

Pleaſant are the thoughts of former times; ſweet the remembrance of the days that have fled. Return, ye deeds of my youth, and let my ſoul yet behold the years of my ſtrength. Let the battles of other times roll before me; and let me view the ſteel of heroes who have been.

Bend

argumentation, will find little difficulty in refuting a doctrine ſupported by a parcel of weavers, ſhoemakers, &c. who, being too lazy to work at their own trades, have taken it into their heads to reform a people already wiſe, acute, and penetrating, far beyond themſelves. As theſe ſervants of the Society have no knowledge of ſcience or literature, they generally endeavour to ſwell themſelves in the eyes of the populace, by groans, ſighs, and other marks of hypocriſy. A ſpecies of impoſition, and an inſult offered to the Author of all religion, for which every man of genuine piety muſt expreſs the warmeſt indignation!

If we look back into the hiſtory of Scotland for the laſt two centuries, we will find every paſſage filled with human miſeries, created by a ſimilar ſet of men, on a ſimilar ſubject. The people of the low countries are now recovered from their dream. Would it not be an object worthy the attention of the Legiſlature, to prevent ſuch an infection ſpreading in the Highlands, by ſending men of parts and learning to inſtruct them?

Bend forward your awful preſence from the clouds of your reſt, warriors of old! ye who raiſe no more the ſpear in battles, be near. Your ſons ſhall hear of your ſtrength; and a tear will trickle down their cheeks when they paſs by the narrow dwelling of the mighty.

A tale of other years ruſhes on my ſoul. I remember the deeds of the days that are paſt.

Gloomy was the night; for the moon hid her fair face from the ſtorm. The ſtars lay aſleep among the folds of their dark clouds. Winds and ſeas came in haſte from other lands. The battles of rocks and ſtorms were terrible, when the ghoſt of Salmor * came forth from his watery bed in the womb of ocean. His footſteps were on the frothy wings of the troubled

* The poems concerning this Salmor are now loſt; but tradition makes frequent mention of him. He was drowned, in paſſing from the continent of Scotland to his own houſe, in one of the Hebrides, on hearing that his wife was taken priſoner, and his lands laid waſte by Tuthmar, a chief of Norway, whoſe father Salmor is ſaid to have killed in battle. A beautiful poem is ſaid to have been compoſed by Salmor's bard, on this ſubject; but the tranſlator has not been ſo lucky as to meet with it.

troubled waves. The gathering of the whirlwind was there: The ſon of the grave roſe on the wings of the blaſt. He ſtood on Craigduth's cliffy brow. The courſe of the ſtorm was round the trembling of his pointleſs ſpear. He leaned forward from his bed of clouds, and his words were heard.

Raiſe, chiefs of Albin *, raiſe the ſpears of your ſtrength. Let the voice of ſhields be

* Albin, which ſignifies a *mountainous country*, ſeems once to have been the name of all the iſland, as well as Britain, in the Galic. But, after the Saxons had defeated the South-Britons, and become maſters of that diviſion, their part received the name of *Saſſon*, the latter *x* being neither written nor pronounced in the Galic. Such of the South-Britains as maintained their independency, were honoured with the appellation of *Uaiſh*, or *Nobility*, in oppoſition to the vulgar who ſubmitted to the conquerors; and the northern diviſion, comprehending all Scotland, has ever ſince been invariably known in the Galic by the name of ALBIN.

To launch forth into the rugged paths of controverſy, is beyond the limits or intention of the preſent notes: But, when the definitions which truth compells the tranſlator to ſubjoin to theſe poems, are directly oppoſite to the aſſertions of writers of reputation on the ſame ſubject, a vindication of them becomes neceſſary.

The

heard, and the gathering of warriors be seen. Not feeble is the arm of the coming foe. The rolling

The Rev. Mr Whitaker, in a recent history of the antient Britains, has displayed the knowledge of a man of science, and the liberality of a gentleman, in a manner which is seldom to be met with in the productions of those who professedly write to injure the reputation of an individual, or the antiquity of a people. It is with reluctance, therefore, I proceed to refute the assertions of an author, endowed with many qualifications to command respect. But, since he has ventured to publish as facts, what is directly opposite to this definition, it becomes necessary to examine how far he is countenanced by truth; as it would be dangerous to lay any fact before the public as genuine, while an author of Mr Whitaker's shining abilities stands unconquered in the field to oppose it.

As the Galic is at present little known, and less studied, ignorance concerning any matter wrapped up within the folds of its garment, would very improperly be attributed as a defect to any writer of character in the republic of letters. But, since Mr Whitaker has, of his own accord, started the contest, and plumed himself on an ideal conquest obtained over all the critics that ever wrote concerning that language, to examine his pretensions to merit, on a subject which he himself has chosen, will certainly be considered as no injustice.

Had Mr Whitaker mentioned the matter in words which could admit of any signification but one, his read-

ers

rolling of Lochlin's dark ſhips is on the reſtleſs boſom of the waves.—Riſe, ſons of Albin, riſe,

ers would be apt to ſuſpect their own want of penetration, rather than imagine ſo great a man capable of writing ſuch abſurdities. I ſhall give the paſſage at large, as it will, no doubt, aſtoniſh every reader acquainted with the antient language of Britain, who has not already peruſed it.

'The whole body of the Caledonians, however, could never have been, and are not now denominated Albanich. The name of Caledonia, compriſing all that peninſula *of land* which lies to the north of the Friths, the appellation of Alban, or the mountains, could have been given *only* to the hilly part of the country, in oppoſitions to the levels of the eaſtern coaſt, and the plains immediately to the north of *Antoninus*'s Vallum. The inhabitants of theſe, I have already ſhown to have been denominated Mæatæ, or Lowlanders, by the Britons and Romans, and the inhabitants of the hills only, are denominated Albanich at PRESENT. The tribes of the Caledonian lowlands were denominated Mæatæ formerly, in contradiſtinction to the nations of the hills. And the clans of the Caledonian mountains are denominated Albanich at preſent, in oppoſition to the reſidenters of the lowlands.' *Whitaker's Genuine Hiſtory of the Britons, page* 270.

The Iriſh extraction of the Caledonians is a favourite hypotheſis of Mr Whitaker. The preſent extract is an attempt

riſe, and let the ſhields of your fathers meet the approaching foe.

The

attempt to eſtabliſh it. Conſcious, however, that the name of the country and inhabitants were againſt him, he endeavours to wave objections too ſtubborn to be conquered, by confining this name to a very inconſiderable part of the Caledonians, the mountaineers, that he might have the pleaſure of mortifying the inhabitants of the low countries, by making their progenitors conſiſt of a deſpicable colony from Ireland, whom he repreſents as ſubduing the Caledonians, and becoming maſters of their country.

Since Mr Whitaker has thus deprived the moſt reſpectable part of the Caledonians of the only name by which they have been diſtinguiſhed, in their antient language, for ages, far beyond the reach of hiſtory, it is to be wiſhed, he had informed us under what denomination to claſs them for the future, whether with the Saxons or the Welſh; as the inhabitants of Britain have, for many centuries, had no other general diſtinction in the Galic than Albinich, Ualſh, and Saſſonich.

Had Mr Whitaker inſiſted on what happened in former ages only, references to hiſtory might be requiſite to refute his aſſertions. But, ſince he has brought the ſubject to the preſent times, the controverſy may be ſpeedily and effectually decided. The reader may, if he pleaſes, aſk any plebeian, who underſtands the Galic, the ſignification of *Albinich*; he will readily receive for anſwer, that it is applied to

all

The departure of the pale-fac'd ſon of night was on the wings of the ſudden blaſt. Oaks of ſtrength trembled before the haſte of his retiring ſteps. The groans of the woods were heard,

all the inhabitants of Scotland, comprehending both thoſe of the high and low countries. If he thinks his informer miſtaken, he may put the ſame queſtion to five hundred; they will all anſwer in the ſame words.—What a pity that Mr Whitaker had not conſulted ſome of them, and not expoſed his ignorance of a language, on the radical words of which he attempts to eſtabliſh a groundleſs hypotheſis; and from whoſe ſignificant terms he endeavours to deduce the origin of nations.

Who can help regretting, that an author of Mr Whitaker's taſte, elegance, extenſive knowledge, and acute penetration, ſhould ſuffer himſelf to become the dupe of prejudice, ſo far as to let himſelf thus be made an eaſy prey by every little critic, without putting them to the trouble of arranging arguments againſt him. No wonder that Cæſar and Tacitus have given ſuch imperfect accounts of the Caledonians eighteen hundred years ago, ſince an antiquarian of Mr Whitaker's penetration, is entirely ignorant of the very name by which they are diſtinguiſhed at this day.

As the inhabitants of Albin are the principal actors in the ſubſequent poems, this inquiry into the extent of their territories, became in ſome degree neceſſary.

heard, as he ruſhed on the clouds of his ſpeed through their whiſtling locks.

Call my heroes from the chace, ſaid the Chief of Albin's chiefs. Kindle my oaks on Drumſina *, that the blaze of many hills may gather my people from their hundred glens.

Such were the words of Morduth †, king of many ſtraths, when his ſhield ſpoke the words of alarm. The ſons of battle heard, and

* Of Drum, *a height*, and Fina, *heroes*. If we might preſume, at this diſtance of time, to form conjectures concerning the ſcene of the preſent poem, we would be apt to place it in the north-eaſt corner of Fife. There is to be ſeen, at this day, the remains of a fortification on the top of a hill, called *Drumcarro*, three miles weſt from St Andrew's. The country people, who always entertain gigantic notions of antient heroes, diſtinguiſh it at preſent by the name of the *Giant's Caſtle*. Though not high, it commands an extenſive proſpect along the eaſtern coaſt, from Lothian to near Aberdeen; and, therefore, a very proper ſituation for kindling a fire, according to the cuſtom of the Scots, as a beacon to alarm the country, on the appearance of an enemy.

† Mor-duth, *great, dark hero*.—All the names in the Highlands, and moſt of the antient ones in the low countries,

and their ſwords forſook their dark dwellings in the ſheath.

Morning ſhook her gray locks in the eaſt, and bade the ſtorm depart. The ſun came forth in mildneſs from the waves, and his riſing beams ſmiled on the blue ſteel of many heroes.

Caivglas * came forward with his cloud of ſtrength. Many ſpears glittered behind Canard. Tommore of the maſſy ſhield gathered his warriors; and why ſhould Mordale, the chief of the weighty ſteel, be laſt? His ſteps were foremoſt to meet the foes of Albin.

Who hath ſeen Swanar, ſaid Caivglas, of other years?—are his warriors many?—I have met him in battle in the days of my ſtrength; but other warriors now raiſe the ſpears of Albin.

Then they ſhall raiſe them in vain, ſaid the ſon of Corvi. Swanar advances with the ſtrength

countries, are at this day ſignificant in the Galic; as Balfour, *cold town*; Leſly, *the half of the plain*; Somerville, *the man of weighty words*, &c.

* Chaibh-glas, *gray locks*;—Chean-ard, *high-head*;—Tom-more, *great hill*;—Mor-dale, *extended valley*.

ſtrength of thouſands. The dazzling beams of the ſun ſparkle round the gloſs of his burniſhed armour. Tall warriors ſink by his ſides. Lofty trees ſeem little as he paſſeth. The rocks of Tirmore diminiſh beneath his extended ſtride. Terrible is the coming of Lochlin's * king! Who of Albin's race ſhall meet the ſtrength of his arm?

Fly to thy cave of ſafety with all thy terrors, thou chief of the feeble arm, ſaid Caivglas. Thy little ſoul trembles at the ſound of danger, like the green leaf which ſhakes on a twig before the wind. Fly thou, like it, from the breath of winter; but here are oaks of ſtrength, who have withſtood the wrath of other ſtorms. Has not the north poured all its fury on our land in the days of former years, and have we not met the blaſt unſhaken?—Fly, thou warrior of yeſterday, to the dwellings of little men.

Had

* All the northern nations who invaded the Caledonians, were compriſed under the general name of Lochlin, in the Galic, comprehending all the different ſtates of Scandinavia. This name ſeems to have been given them by the Caledonians themſelves; as the word, in their language, literally ſignifies, *The deſcendants of the ocean.*

Had he, who is but of yeſterday, no foes but thee, well might he tremble for the fame of his battles:—But Lochlin's race ſhall meet his ſword warm from thy ſide. Thy words have already been heard,—ſon of pride:—ſhew thy ſteel.

The ſpears of the two chiefs roſe. Their warriors on either ſide half unſheathed. Now would the ſteel of Albin have pierced her own boſom, and fought the battle for Lochlin's race, had not the king, the ſhield of his people, come forward, and ſtopped the upliſted ſpear. He ſaw, with grief, the ſtriſe of the heroes. His frowning eye rolled from chief to chief. He dreaded the fall of his people, and his words were heard.—

Unſheath not the ſword, ye ſons of ocean, leſt the tales of your land ſay we ſank by your ſtrength. Your fathers have often raiſed the ſpears in vain. Their tombs are many on our coaſts; but ſmile, ye ſons of the ſea, for Albin has unſheathed the ſword againſt herſelf.

Abaſhed, the ſons of diſcord ſhrunk from the wrath of the king, like two dark clouds

that roll their courſe to different hills, when the ſun looks forth in all his majeſty.—The vallies before them are ſad, and ſee the coming of the tear of heaven. Little hills are paſt unheeded.—Their courſe is towards the higheſt mountains, that rear their haughty heads in the wide extended regions of the ſky.—So dark, ſo tremenduous, rolled the chiefs their threatening courſe towards the foe.

The King came forward with the ſtrength of Albin, like the rock of Tonmore *, when it collects the force of all its cliffy brows to meet the boiſterous waves of ocean.

Swanar advanced with all his pointed ſpears. The ſtrength of Lochlin moved like a ſtorm from the north, which ſlowly rolls its clouds along the hills. No angry wind travels in wrath: No raſh blaſt wanders alone.—The ſtrength of the north blows equal.

The ſpears of Albin roſe high. The words of ſteel were heard. As the meeting of two great rocks in the bottom of the hollow glen, rolling with fury from the lofty brows of oppoſite

* Tonn-more, *great waves.*

poſite hills, when the brown hind flies with horror the danger of their courſe; ſo bold, ſo fierce, ſo terrible, was the meeting of the two hoſts. Many foes ſank before the ſtrength of Albin. Many more ſupplied the places of the fallen.

The horror of battle roared along the heath. Mordale ſtrode among the ſlain. A bloody ſtream pours from Canard's ſpear. The ſoul of each hero was bright; but who could withſtand the ſtrength of thouſands?

Morduth ſaw the backward ſteps of his people, and the kindling rage of his mighty ſoul awaked. He raiſed his terrible ſpear in wrath, and the groans of new-formed ghoſts were heard. But his heroes were diſtant far, and his foes were many. He retired at laſt to his hoſt, like the angry torrent, when, murmuring, it falls from the ſhaggy brow of the rock. An hundred times the pride of ocean bids his furious waves climb the rugged height. An hundred times the rock throws them back into the reſtleſs deep. The voice of their rage is terrible, as they ſhake their hoary locks to the wind.

Why

Why doeſt thou frown in the weſt, fair haired traveller of the ſky? Our foes were not of the feeble. Often have the dark clouds concealed thy own beauty in the day of the ſtorm. But, when thou driveſt the wind from thy lands, and purſueſt the tempeſt from thy fields; when the clouds vaniſh at thy nod, and the whirlwind lies ſtill at thy deſire; when thou lookeſt down in triumph on our land, and ſhakeſt the white locks of thy awful majeſty, in pride, above our hills; when we behold thee clothed in all thy lovelineſs, we rejoice in the conqueſt thou haſt made in heaven, and bleſs thy friendly beams, O Sun!——

But retire to thy heathy bed with ſmiles, bright monarch of the ſky; for we will yet be renowned.

MORDUTH.

MORDUTH,

BOOK II.

THRICE had the dark-haired night ſhook her miſty wings in the eaſt. Thrice had the trembling ſtars attempted to look forth. Thrice had the ſighs of the vanquiſhed mingled with the wind, when the ghoſts of departed heroes were ſeen ſtalking in wrathful ſteps on the hills. Meteors rolled together on the heath. Feeble voices whiſpered in the clouds. The affrighted hoſt heard it, and dreaded the frown of their fathers who never fled.

The king ſtood on Ardcraig's * brow. An hundred ſpears are half erected round. Each ſpear ſupports the grief of a chief. Behind ſtood the darkened hoſt, a gloomy cloud! The looks of the king were round him to behold their thoughts, and his words came forth.

Fate

* Ard-craig, *high rock.*

Fate frowns, and the feeble retire from danger. The voice of the ſtorm is heard, and the ſons of little men fly to the cottage; but the rock meets the breath of the north, and ſhakes not. The courſe of the ſtorm is abroad; but oaks of ſtrength raiſe their heads regardleſs of its wrath.

Say, then, chiefs, are we of the ſons of little men? Are our ſpears feeble twigs ſprung from Albin's oaks of ſtrength?

The force of many foes ruſhed from the north in the days of other years. Did our fathers fly before them?—No, warriors! they fled not from the ſtrength of thouſands. Their ſpears roſe high: The ſons of the ſea ſank before them. Shall we then fly on the hills of their triumph, where the ghoſts of the foe were wont to murmur from the whirlwind as they fled from tomb to tomb?—Theſe gray ſtones, the marks of other battles, lift their moſſy heads in the face of heaven, and ſeem to ſay, 'Your fathers fled not.'

The king ſpoke. The chiefs ſtood fixed in grief. By times they viewed their ſpears, and graſped their boſſy ſhields. Swords were half-unſheathed,

unſheathed, and half-formed accents mingled with the wind.

Morcan *, the leader of Aulduth's † warriors, came forward. Thrice he ſhook the locks of his age. Thrice his ſpear is daſhed againſt an oak. His eye dropt the tear of woe; his mouth the words of grief.

My name, O king! was not wont to be mentioned with the feeble. I was not accuſtomed to fly before my foes. Part of my ſtrength has fled with my years; but fear has not yet found room in my withered nerves. The hope of my gray hairs was in the riſing fame of my ſon. His hand, I thought, would raiſe my tomb. Nor ſpear, nor tomb, ſhall ever riſe by him. He ruſhed forward in the battle,

* Mor-chean, *great head*.—This diſtinction was not altogether ſo rude as the elegant author of the Annals of Britain affirms, in the etymology of the name of Malcolm Canmore. The idea of loftineſs, as well as greatneſs, is expreſſed by the original; and, therefore, very properly applied to a man exalted above the common people, whether by ſtature or ſtation.

† Auld-duth, *black-ſtream*.

battle, where no friend could aid. The riſing of many ſpears was round him:—He ſank in the midſt of falling foes.

Peace to the ſhade of the hero, ſaid the king! he muſt not wander alone to the miſty dwellings of his fathers; ſome chief of Albin muſt attend. The land of clouds is gloomy. The warrior is a ſtranger, and alone.

*Ogvan, the ſon of Corvi, graſped his ſhield, and ſhook his ſpear to the wind.—Shall we reſt till morning ſhow her fair face in the eaſt; or raiſe the ſteel among the clouds of night, and lay the foe with the deer of their feaſt?

Often, ſaid Canard, did our fathers give the ſhell of joy; but when did they ſpread death round the feaſt of ſtrangers?—The mighty are among the race of Lochlin. We too will rejoice in our turn; or, if we fall, let us not depart, like the dim cloud that travels over the mountains, while the moon is aſleep, and the twinkling ſtars ſhrink from the preſence of the ſtorm. The morning will ſoon ſhake her gray locks in the eaſt. The ſun will look forth

*Og-bhan, *young fair warrior.*—

forth from the blue fields of his pride, and ſmile on the raiſing of our ſteel, while death frowns grimly at the point of each ſpear.

Let heroes who expect their tombs to riſe by the white-armed daughters of beauty, ſaid the bearer of Dunairm's * ſhield, reſt till morning; but Moralt ſhall fall amid the ſhades of night. No tomb of mine ſhall riſe: No tear from the lovely ſhall bathe it. None ſhall lament over me, ſaying, 'Oh my hero!'—None ſhall lament over me, ſaying, 'Oh my ſon!' † My arrow hath pierced the breaſt of the lovely: My ſpear is ſtained with the blood of my kindred.

My fathers were the foes of Albin. Their ſpears roſe with Lochlin's king. I longed to travel upon the waves of ocean. Six warriors raiſed my white ſails. The wind came in haſte from the north: Waves gathered ſtrength from the blaſt. Seas mingled with clouds

* Dunairm, *the tower of arms.*

† 'They ſhall not lament for him, ſaying, ah my brother, or ah ſiſter! They ſhall not lament for him, ſaying, ah lord, or ah his glory! He ſhall be buried with the burial of an aſs, drawn and caſt forth beyond the gates of Jeruſalem.' Jerem. xxii. 18.

that hurried along the face of the deep. The high hills of Albin roſe on the top of the waves *. The green woods of Sliavan ſhook their

* What is here tranſlated, *The high hills, &c.* ſtands in the original Dheirich Albin air braidh-tonn. The Dh in the firſt word having the ſound of y in Engliſh; and in the middle of the laſt, being, according to the genius of the Celtic language, quieſcent, is pronounced thus: Yeirich Albin air braitoin; Brai ſignifying invariably *top*, and toin *waves*.

To pretend to give a definition of the word *Britain* juſt, and, at the ſame time, different from all that have already been advanced by ſo many eminent writers on that ſubject, would beſpeak a degree of arrogance which the Tranſlator would ſedulouſly wiſh to avoid: But, he has the greateſt reaſon to believe, that the etymology of it cannot, with propriety, be deduced from any other root than *Brai-tain*.

That the language of the Gauls and Britons was the ſame, we learn from undoubted authority; and, it would be doing material injuſtice to the intelligent reader, to imagine him capable of ſuppoſing this could be any other than the Celtic. As this was undoubtedly the firſt language ſpoke on both ſides of the Engliſh channel, it renders it more than probable, that it is the only one in which the origin of the word *Britain* is to be found.

That Britain was at firſt peopled from the oppoſite coaſt of Gaul, is a rational hypotheſis; and accordingly has been

their locks before the bounding of our bark:
The hall of Dunairm was the home of ſtrangers. The gray haired chief ſtretched forth

been adopted by the moſt eminent hiſtorians: That, as Britain was within ſight of Gaul, the inhabitants would beſtow on it ſome name before they croſſed the channel, is a ſuppoſition not altogether improbable. The Celtic language contains no names that are not ſignificant of the external appearance of the objects on which they are beſtowed. Ingenuity could certainly ſuggeſt no term more ſignificant of the appearance of Britain from France, viewing it over the convexity which the globe forms in the breadth of the channel, than, 'The land on the top of the waves.' The antient poems in the Highlands are, at this day, replete with ſimilar expreſſions applied to any land viewed over a part of the ſea.

That *the top of the waves* is a faithful tranſlation, is aſſerted with a poſitive tone: But the arguments advanced, with a view to derive the name of our iſland from it, are only the children of imagination; and, therefore, left to be cruſhed or cheriſhed at the mercy of the reader. No attempt, however, hath been made to miſlead him, as the Tranſlator does not pretend to ſupport his opinion, either by the teſtimony of hiſtory, or the voice of tradition. It is, notwithſtanding, countenanced by the univerſal cuſtom of the Celtic nations, of never beſtowing a name on any object that was not highly ſignificant and characteriſtic.

This

forth the hand of friendſhip to receive us. Welcome, ſaid he, are the ſons of ocean, when they come in peace. Our deers are many: Our ſhells are full. The tales of our bards are pleaſant; and why ſhould the ſtranger mourn in our hall?

The feaſt was ſpread with mirth, and we bleſſed the foes of our fathers.

Minvas * ſhone in the hall of her father, like the firſt beam of the riſing ſun, when it ſmiles on the dewy plains. Many chiefs ſought the love of the maid; but ſhe turned her eyes from the mighty, and fixed them on Moralt.

Nor hills, nor warriors were mine. I went to the battle alone. The foes of Lochlin had fallen by my hand; but my fame was not heard.

Go, ſaid the maid; fight the battles of other kings. Gather thy fame in a diſtant land; ſend

This is the only evidence we can reaſonably expect, in ſupport of the origin of terms which have made their way to us, from a people deſtitute of the uſe of letters, and conſequently of any other means of conveyance, than the ſignification of words.

* Min-bhas, *ſoft palm.*

ſend it before thee to Minvas, and ſhe will own thy love.

I went to Erin's * king. Many of his foes fell by my ſword. My name was heard in ſong.

* All the places which lay to the weſt, were anciently denominated *Era*; as Erin, Ireland; Er-gael, Argyle, ſignifying the weſtern Celtæ, in oppoſition to thoſe who inhabited the eaſtern coaſt of Scotland.

The Rev. Mr Whitaker gives a very different account of the matter; and claims no ſmall portion of merit from the diſcoveries he has made, and the victories he has gained over all the critics and hiſtorians who have written on this ſubject. If theſe claims are properly founded, no apology will be due to the reader for laying them before him.

'Ar-gathel, Iar-gael, or Ar-gyle. This name has puzzled all the critics and hiſtorians. But it is nothing more than the IRISH. The Britons being univerſally called *Gathel*, and *Gael*, ſuch of them as went over into Ire-land, Iar-in, or Er-in, muſt naturally have received the appellation of Iar-gael, Er-gael, Ar-gael, or the Ir-iſh Britons; and the appellation remains, to this day, among the Iriſh, in their cuſtomary appellation for their own language, Caelich Eir-inach, or the Ir-iſh Britiſh.' *Whitaker's Genuine Hiſtory of the Britons, p.* 287.

Oſtentation never raiſed her giddy head with leſs reaſon than in the above extract. It is aſtoniſhing how a writer of

song, and my fame travelled over many seas. The daughters of Innis-fail spread their white arms

of Mr Whitaker's penetration could attempt to gather laurels in the field of Celtic etymology. Ignorant of every dialect of that language, he deceives himself by the similarity of sound, or by pronouncing letters, which, according to the genius of the language, ought to be quiescent. Laying, thus, the basis of his hypothesis on a false foundation, he proceeds to erect a structure, which even the beautiful manner of his execution cannot rescue from censure; and, he almost compells his intelligent readers to forget that respect which is due to him, as a gentleman of genius and learning.

The name of *Argyle* has never puzzled any critic or historian who understood the language of its inhabitants, as there are not two words in it easier defined than those that compose it, *i. e.* Era, *west*; and Gael, the general name of the Celtic nations.

The Britons are here said to be universally termed Gathel and Gael.—As much knowledge in the Galic as generally falls to the share of a school-boy, would be sufficient to inform Mr Whitaker, that the names are both the same; that the *th* in the middle or end of words, after a broad vowel, are universally silent; and, although written by some antient authors, are never pronounced. A thorough knowledge of the fundamental rules of Celtic grammar would have saved Mr Whitaker and his readers

an

arms before me in vain. When peace ſmiled on the land, I returned to the maid of ſnow.

The

an immenſe deal of trouble, and reſcued the ſubject from that obſcurity into which his ignorance of them has thrown it, by creating ſeveral names out of one. The whole argument is founded on a ſuppoſition, that the term *Gael* was applicable to no other people than the Britons.

The word *Gael* ſignifies literally *Whites*, and is the name by which we find the principal inhabitants of Europe, towards the weſt, firſt diſtinguiſhed in antient hiſtory. Accordingly, all the remains of that people, to this day, call themſelves *Gael*; as Gaelic-albinach, the language of the Gaels in Albin; Gaelic Erinach, the language of the Gaels in Ireland, and Gaelic-uallſh the language of the Gaels in Wales.

The inhabitants of Britain were never called *Gael* from their country, but from their language. The appellation, therefore, always was, and is, at this day, applied promiſcuouſly to the inhabitants of both iſlands, who continued to ſpeak the antient Celtic.

That the Iriſh call their own language 'Gaelic-erinach,' is an undiſputed truth. But the ſubſequent definition of it, or '*the Iriſh Britiſh*,' furniſhes a glaring inſtance of the boldneſs with which this author advances the chimera of his own brain in the face of well atteſted facts. Does not Mr Whitaker know, that the Galicians in Spain ſpoke this language? Does he not know that the Gauls in France ſpoke it? Does not he know that the Iriſh themſelves

The ſun lay aſleep, and the moon wandered from cloud to cloud, when the hall of Dunairm appeared. From the ſkirts of a birchen grove the breath of night conveyed to my ears a ſound ſoft as the breath of ſummer.—'Go; and, if thou fall, Minvas will bathe thy ſweet memory with her tears.'

My ſoul, that never trembled before, ſhook with dread and horror. I ſaw Minvas; and ſtately was the warrior who ſtood by her ſide.

I bent

ſelves ſpoke it? Why then pretend to confine it to the Britons?

Ignorance of the Celtic language, which may, in ſome caſes, be held forth as a ſhield for Mr Whitaker, will not here avail him. A writer far leſs verſant in the voluminous hiſtory of antiquity, muſt have known, that, when Argyle received its name, Gael, or Celtæ, was applied to many nations of Europe. What apology, therefore, ſhall candour find for an author who could thus flatter his own vanity, and gratify the prejudice of his countrymen, at the expence of truth, and violation of theſe ſacred principles of honour, on which every hiſtorian ought to value himſelf?—But he is not ſingular in his conduct. The utmoſt efforts of the mind ſeem to extend no further than to *propoſe* well. The *execution* generally compels us to regret each others weakneſs, and lament that human nature, even in her nobleſt appearance, is clogged with infirmities.

I bent my bow.—Go, ſaid I to an arrow, pierce that breaſt of falſhood. Let no other warrior ſearch for fame to pleaſe that heart of pride.

The ſteel entered her white boſom *. Her variegated garment is ſpread on the heath. Her long hair is bathed in her blood. Her groans are mingled with the ſighs of night.

Whence came the meteor of death, cried the warrior?—From an arm of ſtrength, I replied; and raiſed my ſpear.

Son of gloomy night, ſaid the aſtoniſhed youth, thy arm is ſtrong becauſe the foe was feeble. The ſpear of the mighty never roſe before a dark heart like thine. But thy ſurly

* This paſſage furniſhes an inſtance of northern barbarity, of which nothing ſimilar is found among the Caledonians. Little credit, however, would be due to the aſſertions of the bard, had he brought this warrior into the poem under a contemptible character, as he was deſcended of the hereditary foes of the Caledonians. But the appearance which he makes throughout the piece, leaves no room to ſuſpect that the poet was led by any ſuch diſgraceful partiality. The preſent is, perhaps, the only crime he could commit, for which his ſubſequent conduct would not entitle him to the reader's forgiveneſs.

ghoſt ſhall forthwith depart from its dwelling, and mingle with the ſons of the wind, where thy boneleſs arm ſhall never raiſe the ſteel againſt the lovely.

Long we fought on the heath. The groans of Minvas were loſt in the claſh of our ſteel. The ſpear of my foe at laſt gave way, and he fell before me. The moon looked forth from the ſkirts of a dark cloud, and I beheld my friend, the brother of Minvas, in his blood.

And art thou fallen, my brother, ſaid the faultering voice of the maid; and ſhall thy father never behold thy return from the chace? —Oh, Moralt! on what diſtant land does thy ſpear riſe againſt the mighty?—No brother of mine ſhall now call thee from the fields of thy fame. But thou wilt ſome time return, my hero, and raiſe the tomb of Minvas near the groves of our former loves.——

I drew the ſteel from the breaſt of the lovely. My tears mingled with the red ſtream from her boſom. She opened her faint eyes, and beheld her Moralt's hands bathed in her blood.—She ſhrieked herſelf into a ghoſt. I ſtrove to graſp it in my arms; but it fled with horror

horror from my embrace, and roſe on a beam of the moon.

Four ſtones mark the dwelling of the hero: Near it roſe the tomb of the lovely. The virgins often give the tear of pity as they paſs: The tenants of the buſh ſing their ſongs of woe. All night I ſit, and liſten to the wind. Dark clouds frown on me as they roll over my head. The children of the air ſhun me with horror.

The chief of Dunairm mourns lonely in his hall. Many tears he ſheds for the fallen. By times he feels his childrens tomb. The paſſing blaſt bears on its wings his voice of woe to diſtant lands. He lifts his ſpear no more: —But I lift his ſpear. I lift it againſt my father's houſe. The ſon of Dunairm fell by my hand; but the foes which ought to fall by him, ſhall alſo come down. Minvas fell before the moon. Before the moon ſhall I meet her father's foes. I will meet them, O king; but I will not return. I will depart like the angry ſtorm which has long poured its froſty venom on the plains. The faireſt lily of the field periſhed before it; The vegetable race ſink by its wrath.

wrath. The fallen ſtag lies at the bottom of the rock. The children of the wing are mute. The leafy garment has fled from the blaſted oak: The foreſt ſhakes its ſcattered locks in the angry face of heaven. The peaſant ſhuns its wrath near the gleam of his oaks. But the father of kindneſs looks forth at noon on the mourning plains with pity. He diſplays the bright locks of his awful beauty. The foe of nature flies from his ſtrength. The hills ſhake the ſnow from their heathy locks, and ſmile at his departure.

Sit thou on the heath till morning, leader of chiefs, and I ſhall fall alone in the midſt of thy foes; leſt it be ſaid, 'The foe of the lovely is among us, we ſhall not proſper.'

Mournful is thy tale, Moralt, ſaid the king; but thou muſt not fall alone.—Albin's ſons will never ſleep on the heath, while ſtrangers fight her battles. Thou art at a beam of fire in the day of danger; but raiſe not, Moralt, the ſteel againſt thy friends. The mighty muſt fall at laſt. The frowns of winter purſue the footſteps of the ſmiling ſummer.—Minvan was a ſun-beam in the ſeaſon of her lovelineſs.

Few

Few could meet the ſon of Dunairm in the days of his wrath. Not unmarked are their dwelling among the tenants of the grave; nor unheard their fame in the breath of ſong. But the ſpear of thy fathers, Moralt, mourns in thy hand. The generous ſteel is aſhamed to reek with the blood of Lochlin.

It is the ſpear of Dunairm's chief, ſaid Moralt, that reeks with the blood of his foes:—Mine ſhall never more riſe in battle. It lies buried * in the tomb of the lovely, beneath the tree of the ruſtling leaf. Strong was the arm which ought to wield this ſpear; but he defends Minvas from the frowns of ſurly gnoſts in the land of clouds †. And ſhall the foe triumph

* It was a cuſtom among the antient Celtæ, to bury or deſtroy every weapon which had been uſed in the commiſſion of any crime or unlucky accident; as it was imagined, that the ghoſts of the injured were endowed with power to render every effort of ſuch weapons fruitleſs in all ſucceeding conteſts. We do not, however, hear of any deſire of revenge being entertained by the ghoſts of thoſe who had been killed in fair combat; for ſuch did not conſider themſelves as injured.

† Some have been led to conclude, from this paſſage, that the antients were of opinion, that the ghoſts of the departed

triumph over his father in the days of his feeble years?—No, O King! they shall never insult his gray hairs while I can wield this spear.

Long mayest thou wield it in renown, O hero! said Canard; but hearken to the woes of others. I too might mourn the fall of the lovely; but sighs call not forth the tenants of the tomb.

Graceful on the hills was Culalin *, the maid of the hand of snow. Her dark hair rose on the

departed remained in a state of hostility with each other.—The words, I believe, will admit of another explanation. The idea of the young warrior's falling in defence of his sister, ran so strong in the mind of Moralt, that a disordered imagination might represent him as still employed in that office after death; and that the bard has, perhaps, given the real words of the distracted hero, and not the received opinion of the antients, who seem to have entertained a milder notion of a future state, than to make it a theatre for a repetition of crimes, or a scene for the decision of future contests. This opinion would be clogged with one material difficulty. What would become of the remains of those ghosts who might fall in these imaginary wars?

* Cul-alin, of *cul*, a poetical name for a lady's fine locks; and *alin*, graceful.—The name of Alan, or Allen, in Scotland and Ireland, is from the same root.

the wind like the raven's wing. The heaving of her white breaſt was as the downy boſom of the ſwan, when the ſoft waves meet it in gladneſs. The beauty of each virgin vaniſhed when the daughter of Sonner appeared. Graceful was the mother of my ſons, and gladneſs ſhone in my hall when her ſoft voice joined the harp.

Guigan, the daughter of Ainer, had taſted my ſecret embrace before I ſaw Culalin, and ſhe turned the red eye of envy on the pride of women. She came to Culalin in the ſeaſon of her ſolitude, and ſpoke the words of deceit.

Pleaſant are the ſmiles of the mid-day ſun, Culalin! cool the ſhade beneath the birchen boughs. The hunters are diſtant far. The ſea has borne her waves to other lands, and left our rocks to raiſe their dark heads before the kindly breeze. Come, daughter of Sonner, and taſte the ſweets of noon.

They wandered through the foreſt. A tall rock within the verge of ocean's bed, affords a grateful ſhade. Sleep ſhut the eyes of Culalin. Guigan plet her long hair with thongs, and fixed them to the cliffy rock. Her hands

of

of ſnow are bound: Her feet are tied to a ſtone. The maid of the gloomy ſoul ſaw the coming of the flood. She rejoiced in the blackneſs of her deeds, and fled.

Ocean came with all his tumbling waves. Culalin ſtartled at the ſound.—Where art thou, my friend? Save me, Guigan, from the hoſtile flood.—

The rocks anſwered in pity to her groans; Sighs iſſued from each hollow cave. But ſoon ſhall ye ceaſe to mourn for my love, ye ſons of the rock! Another wave, and ſhe lies peaceful beneath the ſtream. The retiring flood ſhall leave her as food for the ravenous children of the ſea.

The ſtrength of thy brother's arm, Guigan, though he was my beſt, my deareſt friend, was no ſhield to thee. Alas! the hero fell before my ſword. He who had ſaved my life in battle, died by my hand. Thou alſo ſleepeſt near him, cruel maid, and thy ghoſt often frowns on me in the ſeaſon of dreams.

But thou, Culalin, of the raven locks! pleaſant art thou in thy lovelineſs, as thou ſmileſt on the couch of my ſlumbers. No ſurly looks

are

are thine. No traveller ſhuns thy dwelling * in the ſeaſon of the moon. Often doeſt thou raiſe thy ſhrill voice on thy rocks, and warn the mariner of the coming ſtorm †. He hears the unerring ſound, and retires within the peaceful boſom of the creek. In ſafety he views the

* It was only the ghoſts of thoſe who had been guilty of ſome crime in their lifetime, that were ſuppoſed to wander and attack the nightly traveller. The puniſhment of ſuch crimes was thought to conſiſt in wandering near their graves, till they met with one whom they fought, and compelled to make reſtitution to the perſons or their deſcendants, whom they had injured in their lifetime; after which, it was thought they were permitted to ſleep in peace.—This notion, if not more rational, was at leaſt more agreeable to the minds of men, than thoſe of a purer religion.

† Storms frequently rage with great fury at ſea, while it is perfectly calm on the land, before the arrival of the winds which occaſion them. Theſe violent agitations in the ocean, cauſe the waves to roar with ſuch fury on the rocks, that they are heard at the diſtance of ſeveral miles. Experience has taught the inhabitants on the coaſt to know, by this noiſe, that the ſtorm is coming, ſome time before it arrives. The antients were of opinion, that this was occaſioned by the ghoſts of thoſe who had been drowned, who were conſidered as monitors to warn men of approaching danger.

the conflict of the waves, and bleſſes the friendly ſound of thy rocks, thou watcher of the nightly ſtorms!

Thus have I ſlain my friend, Moralt; yet my ſpear riſes with ſucceſs againſt the foe.—The lovely riſe but to fall: The mighty gather ſtrength but to ſink.

Canard ſaid, and his mournful words ceaſed.—Silent and gloomy ſat the liſtening hoſt. Sighs broke forth at the cloſe of the tale of woe. The foreſt ceaſed to wave its dark head: The ſhort-limbed heath ſtood ſtill. Clouds were fixed in the face of heaven. No rocks contended with the blaſt. Peace was proclaimed among the vegetable race; for the wind ceaſed to travel *.

What

* This is ſuppoſed to be the ſituation of ſurrounding objects, while the two foregoing epiſodes were relating, though not deſcribed till now.

Callum Ruadh, a bard ſtill alive in the Highlands, has given a ſimilar deſcription of the attention paid to antient bards during the rehearſal of their pieces. I have endeavoured to atone, as far as I could, for the injury it has ſuffered in the tranſlation, by throwing the paſſage into rhyme.

When

What faint beam, with its half formed ſmile, gladens the cheek of the eaſt? The moon is aſleep in her heathy bed, and the ſun is not yet

When battles ceas'd, and warriors ſheath'd the ſword,
Bards join'd the circle round the burning ourd.
The deeds of heroes then employ'd the ſong:
Attentive were the old, and mute the young.
The ſons of diſcord ceas'd to ſearch for blood;
And life-inſpiring caſks half empty ſtood.
Then Beauty's daughters got no half-ſtol'n glance,
And maids in rich attire forgot the dance.
The ſons of mirth neglect'd to form the ring,
And the bow ceas'd to croſs the trembling ſtring.
The finny tribe ſtood liſt'ning in the flood,
And ſilence ſway'd her ſceptre o'er the wood.
The foe of deers lean'd on the ſire of death,
And the roe-buck in ſafety cropt the heath.
The welcome theme brought forth the pleaſing dew,
When every chief receiv'd what praiſe was due.
Woe had not then engaged each melting tear;
For pleaſing admiration got her ſhare.
The love of valour fir'd each warrior's breaſt:
Proud of his chieftain's feats, he rear'd his creſt.
The ſires reflected on their former days;
The ſons were eager to deſerve ſuch praiſe.
Joy ſparkled in the face which age made pale;
Each bleſs'd the mouth that told the welcome tale.

yet prepared to ſtep forth in the brightneſs of his beauty.——It is Minvas, the maid of the bloody boſom, coming with her hundred meteors to light Moralt, the hero of other lands, the bearer of her father's ſhield, to the fields of death.

In wrath the virgin comes not to her friends. She purſues the gloom of night from our mountains. The morning ſtar trembles in her hand. She comes like the firſt beam which the ſun ſends forth to proclaim his approach before he leaves his bed of reſt in the eaſt.

Why doſt thou fly from us in haſte, maid of the mild aſpect?—But thou haſt left morning on our hills; and thy dim form has diſappeared, like a cloud of miſt on the lake, which vaniſhes before the face of the fire of brightneſs.

MORDUTH,

BOOK III.

FAINT beams ſmiled in the eaſt. Gloomy night fled on her wings of ſpeed. The twinkling ſtars retired to other lands; and the ſun prepared to raiſe his fair head, when a bard appeared on the heath with his ſong of pride.

Swanar, the chief of an hundred chiefs: He that is ſtrong as a rock in the ſea, as a hill on the land, ſends his terrible ſong to the ſons of the mountains.

His eagles are on their wings. His hawks, the followers of his ſpear, are round him. His ravens have winged their journey round his ſhips, over many ſeas. The devouring tribes aſk for food. Does the chief of this land grant them his warriors for their feaſt; or, does he bend before the mighty, and offer them

them his deer?—Speak, ye who fly in battle; for many deaths are in the points of Lochlin's spears.

The words of Swanar are great, bard of the hoary locks! His words are great, becauſe his foes are few. But, ſit thou here, and taſte the ſhell of friendſhip, ſon of ſongs; and, when thou returneſt to Lochlin's king, tell him that the ravenous ſons of the wing have but followed their food over many ſeas*. Bid him advance with his thouſands. Tell him that our arms are ſtrong, and that our ſouls are bright.

The bard heard the words of the king, and departed in the pride of his haughty ſteps. He talked of ghoſts as he went, becauſe he foreſaw the fall of many.

As the angry ſtorm from the north gathers all its winds, and rains, and clouds, when it prepares

* When any bird of prey was ſeen ſitting on the maſt of a ſhip, it was conſidered as a very bad omen. It was imagined they were endowed with the gift of foreknowledge, by which they followed ſhips for ſome time before they were wrecked. The Highlanders, to this day, conſider any veſſel on which they are ſeen, as doomed to deſtruction.

prepares to ruſh along the plains and pour its fury on the mountains; ſo gathered Swanar the warriors of his land. Their ſhields were like the dark clouds of night: Their faces like the ſtars looking forth by times from their ſable ſkirts.

The force of Albin advanced like a ridge of mighty waves, whoſe ſtrength is increaſed by the hoſtile breath of many blaſts. Above is the courſe of the ſtorm. The broad-faced moon looks down by times. The mariner hears the hideous ſound with horror. He truſts in the ſtrength of his bark, and prepares to meet the danger which he cannot ſhun.

O hunter of Corri! how ſhall I deſcribe the deeds of our arms?—Thou haſt ſeen Morcraig. It rears its head aloft, and drags the clouds from heaven to clothe its ſhaggy brows. A mighty torrent tumbles from its top. Its downward journey is an hundred times the length of the talleſt warrior that ever raiſed the maſſy ſhield.—Thou haſt ſeen the conteſt between the flood and the rocks below;—but thou never didſt,—hunter of Corri! thou never ſhall ſee ſtrife like ours.

As

As the feeble twig bends before the ſtorm, when angry ghoſts contend in the ſky; ſo bent the race of Lochlin before the king of Albin. Swanar ſaw his coming, and thrice he ſhook his ſpear.

But thou ſhakeſt it in vain, ſon of the ſea. Albin's chief is a rock which laughs at the ſtorm. The ſtrongeſt waves ſhrink with terror from its angry brows.

But I never ſhrunk with terror, ſaid the king of the north. My arm is ſtrong as an hundred ſtorms. Rocks, woods, and mountains, oppoſe not me. Have not I defeated the force of the ocean?—Stormy ſeas ſpread themſelves round my coaſts, and cry with all their threatening waves, 'Thou ſhalt go no further.' But ye cry in vain, ye haughty ſeas! Have not I defeated your ſtrength; and ſhall the king of this land ſtand before me?

Such were the words of the two chiefs; but, when they raiſed their terrible ſpears, the earth ſhook around, trees fell torn from their roots. Rocks groaned beneath their feet,

and,

and, forſaking their beds of reſt, rolled away with terror.

Many ſwords roſe around: Many arrows fled from the yew. Many warriors ſtood at a diſtance, and viewed the ſtrife of the two kings. But the ſhield of Swanar ſank, and his people trembled. The ſpear of Morduth roſe to end the ſtrife; but the thoughts of the valiant darted on his ſoul, and he ſpared the ſhieldleſs breaſt.

Moralt was forward in the bloody conteſt. A ghoſt aſcends from each ſtroke of the hero. Diſtant ſtood a chief of Lochlin, tall as a tree by the ſtream. The ſons of Albin fall back from his ſhield, as the waves from a rock.

So ſtands the oak of many years. The courſe of the ſtorm is abroad; but thy head, daughter of ſtrength and beauty, is exalted, and thou regardeſt not the wrath of the blaſt. Safety is behind thee; and the hunter ſhuns the ſtorm near thy ſtately trunk. Thou art his ſhield from the violence of its rage.—So ſtood the feeble behind the ſhield of the chief *.

* To do juſtice to the merits of an opponent, appears to be

Moralt raiſed his ſpear againſt the mighty ſon of the ſea. The meeting of the two heroes was terrible. Rocks anſwered to the groans of their ſteel. The torn heath fled from the ſtruggling of their footſteps: Trees fell before the ſtrife of their ſpears. The ſons of little men ſaw it, and were afraid.

Long the heroes fought, and long the admiring hoſts beheld the gleam of their ſteel. But both ſank together on the heath, and the bloody ſtream was from both their ſides, when Moralt ſpoke:

I am low, warrior!—my ſpear ſhall no more meet the ſhield of the mighty: My ſword ſhall no more glitter in the ſtrife of heroes.—I have yet one brother, Solva of the maſſy ſhield. He purſues the deer on the banks of Bawnar.—If thou wiſheſt to fall by the mighty, meet him, and thy fame will be great in ſong.—

And

be one of the higheſt triumphs which human nature can boaſt of obtaining over that narrowneſs of mind, which the cultivation of modern politeneſs ſeems but to cheriſh. Nature, however, rears her head with dignity, and claims ſeveral honours of this kind due to her children. But theſe moſt frequently occur among a people whom the haughtineſs of ſcience has termed *Barbarians*.

And have I raiſed the ſteel againſt thee, O Moralt!—Hath my hand laid the ſon of my father low?—Thou who taught me to wield the ſpear!—But never more will I wield it.—Reach me thy hand of friendſhip;—I will graſp it to my boſom. We will travel together to the dwellings of our fathers.—One cloud will be our bed in the land of ghoſts.

The mournful hoſt heard the words of Solva. The race of Lochlin fled to their dark ſhips.—Morduth dropt a tear over the heroes, and bade the battle ceaſe.—The huge ſtone roſe above the mighty. Near it is the ruſtling of an aged oak. The whirlwind ſtops betimes on its boughs: The meteors of night dance round it.—The traveller ſhuns it in the ſeaſon of ſtars: With horror he ſhuns the unfrequented path.—Two ghoſts are its guard; and nought but the roaring ſtorm is permitted to viſit the tombs of the heroes.*

* This is all that the Tranſlator could collect of the admired and well known poem of Morduth. Several old perſons remember to have heard other epiſodes, which are now loſt. Where theſe were introduced, cannot now be aſcertained. In the places where it is here divided into books, it is cuſtomary for the Bards, or others who rehearſe it, to pauſe, take ſnuff, and make remarks.

THE

CHIEF OF SCARLAW.

LONG have I followed the footſteps of the ſtag on the hills of Fuarven. Often has the ſummer ſun returned from his ſouthern journey; and, with the animating ſtrength of his kindly beams, called forth the flowery offſpring of the vale. Theſe, for a while, have waved their golden locks, and ſmiled upon their nodding ſtalks: But they vaniſhed before the breath of the north; and their children have afterwards ſprung up, and filled their places.

Chiefs of old! ye have alſo fallen: But your children have not filled your places *. Many years have been mine. I behold no companions

* Complaints of this nature have been pronounced with great ſeverity in all ages, againſt the riſing generation. As

age

companions of my youth, but the rocks and the woods. Five chiefs have arisen in my days, and

age and infirmities enfeeble and contract the powers of the body, they are generally productive of similar effects upon the mind. Old men are liable to be biassed by groundless prejudices and ungenerous sentiments. They affect to despise the world, because they can no longer enjoy it; and are apt, upon that account, to display their ill nature and chagrin on every thing around them. They seldom fail to draw partial comparisons between the companions of their juvenile years, and the youths that surround them in their decline of life.

Thus Ossian represents those that immediately followed the Fingalian race, as *little men*. Morguth, who succeeded Ossian, tells us, that, in the days of his gray hairs, the feeble tried in vain to raise the spears of their mighty fathers; and the same strain has been sung by almost every bard to our own days.

These poems were handed down with great care to succeeding ages, who did not presume to call in question the veracity of what was advanced by their favourite bards, but understood every word in a literal sense.

The human mind, eager of prying into the obscurity of former ages, and always creating difficulties it cannot surmount, began to form gigantic notions of the heroes of these poems. All the bards agreed, that mankind was degenerating, with great rapidity, from the strength and stature

and ſunk into the grave in the winter of life. They held the ſhield againſt the foe, and ſpread the feaſt before the ſtranger. The ghoſts of their enemies fled from their ſwords in the day of battle.—The heroes lie in Killeuſan: Their fame is in the ſong of bards.

Little Gruiman of the ſurly brow came afterwards. He fled in the time of danger; and ſank beneath the arm of a feeble foe. He was laid under the ſtone, with the dry burial of the little ſoul.—No virgin of diſordered locks was ſeen near his tomb *.

Sons

ſtature of the antients. The imagination at laſt, ſhaking off the fetters of reaſon, and overleaping the bounds of probability, looked back, at full liberty, on the ſtature of their anceſtors, and magnified every generation ſucceſſively, till it preſented the mind with the idea of that monſter called *a Giant*.

The bards cheriſhed theſe notions, which the vulgar ſwallowed with a voracious appetite, and ſatiated their hearers with a *quantum ſufficit* of the marvellous, as they could now magnify the ſtrength, ſtature, and actions of their heroes *ad infinitum*. But theſe magazines of bombaſt were of ſhort duration, as the beſt bards of all ages have always expreſſed a hearty contempt for this ſpecies of compoſition.

* It is with pleaſure we read ſuch paſſages in antient poetry, as repreſent the ladies the patrons of virtue.

As

Sons of the few years, ye that be but of yeſterday! the ſtrength that was mine is yours. Lend me the arm of your youth.—Carry me to the towering top of Benmore, that I may view the hills that wave their heath-brown locks round the ſtrath of Fingal *, the warrior of other days.

O

It has been remarked of great poets, That they are very ſparing of general encomiums on the fair-ſex; and the preſent compliment ſeems to come undeſignedly. Their contemptuous neglect of a puſillanimous chief, is here mentioned, with a view to darken his character, not to illuminate theirs. But the eye of penetration may look a little further, and view them in their genuine colours, puniſhing vice with their frowns, and rewarding virtue with their ſmiles.

Encouraged by the ſilence of ſome antient poets, certain modern ones have preſumed to pronounce general cenſures upon the ſex. But, had theſe gentlemen given us their compoſitions with as little reſerve as the preſent bard ſeems to have done, and preſented the image of their own breaſt with equal ingenuity, there is great reaſon to think, that ſeveral paſſages ſimilar to this, would appear againſt them in their writings. No poet of reputation, however, has ventured to deviate from nature, ſo far as to make the ſoft eye of beauty ſmile on a deſpicable character among the males.

* Fingal, *the Celtic hero.* The word *Gael*, (the Celtæ of the

O Offian, king of ſongs! thou who drew the tear from the eye: Thou who brought the

the Roman authors), ſignifies literally *Whites*, and was probably once the univerſal appellation of all the Europeans, in oppoſition to the *Blacks* of the warmer climates. All the remnants of that once great people, call themſelves *Gael*, in whatever country they are ſcattered. The word *White*, and their own name *Gael*, are both written and pronounced the ſame at this day.

The Rev. Mr Whitaker has placed his opinion on this ſubject, in direct oppoſition to all the Celtæ themſelves; and aſſerts, that it is 'a deſignation too effeminate for the bold and ferocious Celtæ.' Whatever effeminate notions that gentleman may have formed of the *white* part of mankind, it is moſt certain, that all the Celtæ had the misfortune to be of that colour; and, therefore, truth compelled them to adopt the name of *Whites*, whatever unfavourable opinions antiquaries may form of their valour from it. If the reader has any deſire to ſee etymology in the moſt abject ſtate of dejection to which pride and raſhneſs ever reduced her, he may conſult Mr Whitaker's definition of the word *Gael*, page 122. The paſſage is too long for inſertion, and, may I be permitted to add, too feeble for oppoſition. After producing the names of ſeveral tribes among the antient Britons, he tell us, that they all ſignified *Woodlanders*: That *Coil* is the ſame with *Gathel*, which, he ſays, ſignifies a wood among the Highlanders and Iriſh at preſent.—The aſſertion, however, is

not

the foe to the ground!—Royal mourner of Selma's race! where ſhall I ſearch for thy tomb? The ſons of negligence have ſuffered the waving heath to cover it.—The hearer of tales round the burning ourd meets thy words; and he melts before them.—The courſe of the ſtorm is abroad; but thy tomb it meets not. The voice of its rage is loud amongſt the projecting cliffs: But thy narrow dwelling, O king of bards! it paſſes over in ſilence. No huge ſtone rears its lofty head there, to compel the flying winds to ſtop their rapid journey, and, with murmuring accents, ſalute the mighty that lie below.—But roll on, voice of the north! The fame of Oſſian regards thee not:—Thyſelf art but for a ſeaſon. Tho' the feeble branches of the wood bend before thee, and the waving heath kneels at thy approach, when thou art gone, they erect their heads, and forget thy ſtrength.—But the ſtrength of

not true; and every ſubſequent argument deduced from it, is totally deſtitute of ſupport. There are not two words in the antient language of Britain, more different in the orthography, ſound, and ſignification, than *Coil*, a wood; and *Gathel*, the ſame as Gael, the univerſal name of the Celtic nations.

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me behold you once more, while my words are heard, before the child of my grandſon ſay, 'The breath of the bard is fled.'—Where is the muſic that is ſweeter than that of thy winged inhabitants? Where is the wind that is fleeter than thy ſtags?—Often have I purſued the ſons of ſwiftneſs: But the feeble who fell behind, and ſhe who ſtaid to protect her young, never fell by my hand. Be kind then to me, ye children of youth; for I fall behind in the chace. No ſteps of ſpeed are mine: My trembling joints ſhake as I move. I fill no more the footſteps of the hound!

O ye, who have ſeen the battles of my youth! when the dead were behind, and the flying foes of Albin before me, ſhake your heads in pity to the weakneſs of my arm!—But ye behold it not, warriors of other days! ye are in the land of ghoſts. Ye retire to the tomb when the watchful cock proclaims the approach of day *.

Sons

* This opinion is not confined to the antient's alone. The Highlanders, at this day, inform us, with great ſolemnity, that the ghoſts of the deceaſed wander from ſun-

ſet

Sons of little deeds, ye who have never been in the ſtrife of heroes, hearken to a tale of former years; and learn to unſheath the ſword when the ſhips of Lochlin appear.

The Chief of Scarlaw purſued his deer far diſtant from Gruimore, on the hills of Ardcraig, near the tumbling of the waves. His ſons, who followed him in the chace, were ten. The oaks lay ready for the flint; and the panting of the hounds was round the falling ſtag, when Dalav ſpoke.—

A

ſet till the cock crows; but the moſt dangerous time of encountering them is about mid-night. Theſe nightly champions, however, were of great ſervice to mankind in ſeveral reſpects; for, it was confidently aſſerted, that the ghoſt would be revenged on any perſon who had defrauded him or his poſterity of their property.

Theſe ghoſts were once a ſtrong bar againſt injuſtice; but, as the commiſſion of crimes became more frequent, new ſchemes were invented to ſcreen the guilty. After the introduction of Chriſtianity, it was ſuggeſted to the populace, that, if they would draw a circle round them on the appearance of a ghoſt, in name of the Trinity, &c. the ghoſt durſt never enter that line of circumvallation. Accordingly, this method of carrying on war againſt the pious inhabitants of the air, is now practiſed with great ſucceſs.

A ſail raiſes her head above the reſtleſs waves of ocean. The wrath of the ſtorm is fierce, but ſhe regards it not. Daughter of beauty, ſtrength, and ſpeed! come to the woods of Scarlaw. The warriors of thy dark boſom ſhall taſte the joys of our hall, and carry our fame to a diſtant land, where the friends of Albin will be many.—Aſhian! ſtrike not yet the flint: Delay the feaſt until the ſtrangers arrive.

Nor feaſt ſhall they taſte, nor fame carry, ſaid the chief. Let every ſon of mine graſp his ſhield. I ſee death on our coaſt; but he ſhall taſte the blood of ſtrangers.—My ſons may fall; but their fame ſhall ſurvive them.

Chief of the open door *, ſaid Dalav, ſuch were not wont to be thy words, when the ſtranger came to Scarlaw's hall. Often have the

* This refers to a ſpecies of hoſpitality obſerved at this day, by the common people, in the Highlands. If the ſeverity of the weather compels them to ſhut their doors, they are ſure to ſet them open when they ſit down to meat, leſt a traveller, by ſeeing the door ſhut, might be induced to paſs by, and thereby deprive them of the pleaſure which they always enjoy in entertaining a ſtranger. A man who ſits down to feaſt with his door ſhut, is conſidered as a diſgrace to the clan to whom he belongs.

The Indian name of Captain Norton the Mohawk chief is Teyhoninokerawen which ſignifies an open Door.

the fingers of diſpatch ſpread the feaſt at his approach *. His ſeat was next thee, near the flame of the oaks; and the joy of thy ſoul was great, when he ſpoke the tales of other lands. Why then beſpeak death to meet the ſons of the waves?

Son of my youth, ſaid the chief, theſe are Lochlin's ſons, who never feaſt in the hall of ſtrangers. Their joy is in the fall of Albin's race.

Then no joy ſhall be theirs, replied the youth of the riſing ſoul. The ſword of Albin is not wielded by a feeble arm.—Shall I go, and inquire their numbers, that warriors may prepare to meet them †?

Yes,

* When a traveller was ſeen coming towards a houſe, victuals were provided for him by the time he arrived. The large ranges of mountains which ſometimes ſeparate the inhabited valleys from each other, rendered ſuch a piece of expedition very often neceſſary. But, when the gueſt came abruptly, he was under a neceſſity of putting up with what was at hand. Hence came the well known invitation of *taking bread and cheeſe till better meat was ready.*

† The Caledonians always conſidered it diſgraceful to meet their enemies with a ſuperior number, till the conduct of their invaders taught them the contrary.

Yes, my ſon, thou ſhalt go; but let thy people be near thee, leſt many ſpears riſe againſt one, and the joy of thy father ceaſe.

* Scalan, the ſon of Shearhuil, opened his mouth; and the words of the little ſoul came forth.

If in haſte we get behind the rocks of Scritan, we may ſink the ſpear of death in the breaſt of every warrior, as he climbs the cliffs. Then Lochlin's race ſhall fall; and no danger be near the ſons of Albin.

Lover of days, ſaid the chief, the mighty fight not thus their battles. We ſeek not for ſafety, but for Albin's foes; and we will meet them when their arm is ſtrongeſt. Let us go to the hall of arms, and call forth every warrior with his ſword of battle, that the ſons of Albin may be ſtrong behind the ſhields of their fathers.

I was then with Benguth, Scarlaw's bard. The fame of his ſong brought me from Gruimore. My joy was great when I heard the ſound of arms.

Son

* Scalan, *ſhadow.* Shear-huil, *ſquint-eyed.*

Son of the ſong, ſaid Scarlaw's chief, Lochlin's race is near. One ſhip is ſeen, and ſhe is not alone. Go to the banks of Dluchoil: Meet them; and ſpeak the words of Albin when her foes approach †.

Benguth

† Theſe, in general, contained an inquiry, whether they came as friends or foes. This practice came almoſt to our own days. The unfortunate M'Donald of Glenco, put the ſame queſtion to the commander of the party ſent by King William to maſſacre an innocent people. The officer anſwered, that they came as friends. Accordingly they were treated with all the demonſtrations of kindneſs and civility which aſſiduity could ſuggeſt, or hoſpitality beſtow, for ſeveral days. But this party afterwards, in the dead of night, pierced with their daggers, thoſe hearts, on whoſe generoſity they had feaſted ſo long; and murdered the chief, with ſeventy of his people; without giving them the ſmalleſt opportunity of drawing a weapon in their own defence.

When the Highlanders were a little recovered from the conſternation into which this piece of treachery had thrown them, the bards poured forth their tears in elegies for their murdered friends. But they appear to have loſt part of their former elegance on this occaſion. The ſubject was entirely new. Their antient poetry contained nothing ſimilar to it; and their language could furniſh them with no epithets capable to expreſs the baſeneſs of the aſſaſſins.

But

Benguth went to meet the foe:—He went, and the locks of age were his ſhield.

Sons of the diſtant land, ye are welcome to Albin's coaſt.—Come ye to empty the ſhell at the feaſt of friendſhip, to rejoice with the race of Albin round the burning oaks, to taſte the joys of the hall of warriors, and purſue the footſteps of the ſtag with the ſons of the chace? —Or does the forward point of the ſpear raiſe the arms of the mighty againſt you? Speak, warriors; the ſwords of Albin are many.—

And let them be ſtrong too, ſaid a chief of Lochlin, what then?—Thy words, ſon of age, terrify not us. We have met the breath of the ſtorm, when it was louder than thine; yet were we not afraid. Go to Scarlaw's gray-haired chief. Tell him, that his ghoſt muſt attend this night at the tomb of Lochlin's king, whom he ſlew in his youth. Bid him come forth with his ſhield of ſtrength. Tell

M him,

But the period is too recent, and the characters alluded to, too well known, to admit of a tranſlation of theſe poems, without giving offence to individuals, and recalling events, which it is the buſineſs of humanity to bury in oblivion.

him, that the ſwords which await him are not in the hands of the feeble.

Benguth ſtroaked his beard.—He ſhook his hoary head; and returned to the hall of Scarlaw.

Come they to mourn at the tombs of their fathers; or, does their forward ſpear call us to battle?

To mourn they come not, O chief! Their words are big with the death of many.—

Then of themſelves be that many, Benguth.—The ſons of Albin will meet them, as the rock meets the breath of the eaſtern ſtorm, when the furious waves tumble in diſorder behind it.

Flaian, youngeſt ſon of mine, be thou near the ſhield of thy father, leſt the ſword of ſtrength oppoſe thee, and thou fall before the weight of thy arm be known.—Dalav, ſon of my youth, I appoint no place for thee. Purſue danger: Thy arm can meet it. If a ſhield of Albin ſink, ſearch for him who brought it down. His fall will raiſe thy fame. Let the ſafety of my people be thy care.—Raſpan, Ogier, and Bawn, ye are young, my ſons;

Few

Few battles have rolled before you. Be near me, and obſerve my ſword by times; for I have fought beſide the warriors of former days.

We moved behind the ſteps of the chief.—Lochlin's army approached: We met on Rovan heath. Scarlaw ſtruck his echoing ſhield. Rattling ſpears roſe around. Lochlin's ſons ſuſtained the ſhock.—Shield met ſword, and ſword met ſhield: The voice of the ſteel returned from the diſtant rocks. The deeds of the mighty pointed out the chief to Lochlin's race: Shields of ſtrength met his ſpear. His ſteps were forward in the battle: But on either ſide Albin's ſons fell back; for the chief was ſurrounded by the arms of youth.

Dalav ſaw the marks of his father's forward ſpear. I fought near the youth. I heard the ſecret groans of his ſoul, as he mourned his ſlow ſteps in battle. Son of Gruimore, ſaid he, the chief is alone: His foes are many; and no arm of ſtrength is near. Go, be thou the ſhield of his back, leſt the coward ſpear come behind, and the fame of Albin ceaſe.

I went

I went to aid the chief; but who can ſpeak the ſtrength of his arm! The meteors of death were in the gleam of his ſteel. Foes ſank before him; Ghoſts roſe behind. His ſteps were in the midſt of bloody ſtreams: The heath of Rovan was the bed of many. Near him was the raiſing of Flaian's ſpear. Strong was the ſhield which oppoſed the fair-haired youth: The efforts of his few years againſt it were fruitleſs. His ſteel returned from the ſtrength of Lochlin's warrior, like the falling drop that is daſhed from the mighty rock, when its lofty cliffs are at war with the reigning blaſt. Its ſudden journey is downwards. The earth is its tomb; and it ſhall no more riſe on the wings of other ſtorms.

Scarlaw ſaw the fall of his ſon: The ſtrength of many ruſhed to his ſword. The foe trembled at the raiſing of his ſteel. Swanvil *, the hero of other lands, held the ſhield to oppoſe it. Terrible was the meeting of the two chiefs! Earth rolled from the wreck of their footſteps: Rocks

* This Swanvil appears to have been a great warrior. He makes a fine appearance in the poem which immediately follows this.

Rocks ſhook with the ſtrength of their ſtruggling. Trees forſook their roots, and hurried down before the courſe of their ſtrife. Warriors ſaw it; and their ſpears ceaſed to riſe.—Thy arm was ſtrong, O Swanvil! and thy ſoul was bright; but who could withſtand the might of Scarlaw?—The ſon of the diſtant land ſank before it.

Who is he that is foremoſt on the ſouth brow of the battle? His wings of ſteel are ſpread like the eagle, when ſhe graſps the rolling cloud in her feathered boſom. The foe bends beneath his ſhield as the heath bends before the whirlwind, when the fold of the cloud is the bed of a hundred ghoſts.—Who ſhould it be, but Dowran from Morcraig's woody ſtreams? The ſpear of his father is in his hand: Below is the bed of the mighty. Quick are the ſteps of the hero amongſt the foe! He ſpares the feeble as he goes. Now he meets a ſhield of ſtrength. The ſpears of the feeble, whom he paſſed, come behind. The glittering ſteel of the warrior riſes no more. Mournful is the ſound of his fall to Albin's race!—What breaſt did not ſigh? What ſword

was

was not forth? What ſpear did not riſe for the fallen hero?—The ſteps of warriors were deep in blood: The collected ſtrength of Albin was in the point of their ſwords.—The ſons of Lochlin fled.

Purſue not the retiring foe, ſaid Scarlaw: Enough of Lochlin's race lies behind. Come near, remaining ſtrength of Albin, let us view our friends that are low. Where is Dowran, Feyglen's warlike ſon? I ſaw his forward ſteps in the bloody field; but my eyes meet him not here.

He lies on the ſouth brow of the battle, ſaid a warrior. The broken ſpear is in his hand: His ſhield is the bloody bed of his breaſt.

Alas! ſaid the chief, too ſoon has the fate of the warrior met the hero. The ſound of Albin's victory ſhall reach his father; but no ſon of his ſhall carry it. A feeble hand will carry back his ſhield; for the mighty arm that brought it forth, ſhall no more return.—O Dowran, chief of warriors! thy ſteps in battle were fierce as the courſe of the angry ſtorm, when the talleſt daughters of the wood bend before the ſtrength of the ruſhing blaſt. But

the

the ſhining of thy armour ſhall be no more ſeen in the fields of death. The ſwords of the mighty may riſe; but thy ſhield will not oppoſe the coming ſtorm. The foes of Albin will no more tremble at thy approach: No more ſhall thy arm be the ſhield of thy father's gray hairs.

A warrior ſighed young Flaian's name. He is not here, ſaid the chief: He lies amid the fallen ſons of Lochlin. The ſtrength of his arm failed; but my ſon is not alone. He was not backward in the battle. His arm would have been ſtrong; but he fell like the young plant of Coil. The ſtorm came round it before the ſpreading roots gathered ſtrength: The blaſt of the north frowned on its tender leaves; and it ſank, while trees of many years defied the ſtorm.

O Flaian, where are the ſteps of thy ſpeed, which were wont to bring thee forward in the chace!—They are no longer thine, early ſunbeam! Too ſoon haſt thou retired to thy narrow dwelling. But the ſtone of fame ſhall exalt its head, and tell to other years thy fall in the ſeaſon of thy beauty. The virgins ſhall

view

view it; and the tear of pity ſhall gliſten on their cheek, like the early dew on the opening roſe. The ſtranger, as he paſſeth, will aſk, 'who lies below?' Then will he hear of thy fall in the morning of thy days; and a ſigh will come forth. The warriors of former years will look down from their bed of reſt in the land of clouds, and rejoice. They will ſmile on thy tomb *, as they paſs it on the wings of the blaſt, when their journey is in the ſtorms of the nights of winter.—

The glittering of youthful warriors came round the ſmoaking ſpear of the chief. He wiped the tear from his eye, when he beheld their future battles.—But Dalav ſtood diſtant from

* It was the policy of the antients to perſuade mankind, that thoſe who fell in battle, were happy in a future ſtate. This opinion was of infinite advantage, in acquiring or defending property, as it ſerved to promote a ferocity of courage, in which the Chriſtians themſelves ſeem by no means to be defective. The leaders of each party have pioufly promiſed their followers happineſs hereafter, as a juſt reward for the commiſſion of murders and devaſtations, and inflicting the greateſt miſeries on their brethren of the human race.

from the reſt, in the anguiſh of his ſoul. He mourned the weakneſs of his arm, which brought him not forward in the battle.—He was behind; but ſhields of ſtrength oppoſed the hero. The chief ſaw the downward face of his mourning, as he leaned upon his half-erected ſpear. Warriors talked of the weight of their ſteel; but the words of Dalav were not heard.

Son of my youth! thy back was not to the foe: Why then doſt thou turn it upon thy father?—I ſaw the broken ſhields round the riſing of thy ſpear, and the days of my ſtrength ruſhed upon my ſoul. Why ſhould my frowns be towards the hopes of my age? What tho' the ſon of Feyglen has fallen; a feather has alſo dropt from Scarlaw's wing of ſtrength.—Flaian ſhall never more purſue the footſteps of the ſtag, nor raiſe the ſpear againſt the foe.—But more ſons are mine:—Albin will yet rejoice in their ſtrength when I am low.

Never ſhall Albin rejoice when thou art low, ſaid Dalav: It is from thy ſword alone that her foes retire. We raiſe the ſpear in vain: In vain does the wrath of our ſteel attack the

foe. Still are we behind: But thou conquereſt, and we come forward.

Thou ſtaidſt behind, my ſon; not that thine arm was feeble, but becauſe the foe was ſtrong. —But let us view our friends behind, that no ſon of Albin may ſleep without his fame.

Gillion, old warrior, thou art low!—No feeble arm has brought thee down.—Thou wert of thoſe that beheld the battles of my youth.—But the days of my youth ſhall no more return; nor thy ſpear, O Gillion! ever riſe in the fields of death. The foes that ſank before thee, were not of the feeble: The broken ſhields around thee fell not from the hands of little men.—Ye who have fought near me in the days of my youth, Why have ye left me alone? Ye are gone, my friends; and I ſtand, like the oak of Slimora, the only remaining daughter of the foreſt. Time! how haſt thou diſpoſed of her ſiſters, which once reared their haughty heads around her? They wave not now their verdurous branches near. No friendly oak ſhields her from the fury of the ſtorm. She has ſurvived all her friends. The blaſted trunk hangs its leafleſs boughs in ſorrow.

row.—Daughter of years, thy fall is near! Thou ſhalt ſoon be low; and the ſtream that bathes thy feet, ſhall paſs over thee.

A young warrior appeared in haſte.—I have been too late, O chief! but the foe may yet return. My arm is not ſtrong; but I will fight beſide young Flaian of the golden locks.

The ſtrength of thy arm will increaſe, ſon of youth! ſaid the chief: But Flaian will never lift the ſpear of battle. Retire to the hall of thy fathers, leſt thou fall, like him, in the midſt of thy blooming years.

The daughter of Feyglen heard his words. —She heard;—but withſtood them not.—The ſhield dropt from her ſmooth arm:—She fell, and the claſhing ſteel ſounded round her white boſom.—The tear of the chief was ſeen;—the ſigh of warriors was heard.—Heroes ſhook their heads in awful grief: Silent ſtood the darkened hoſt. They ſaw the daughter of the chief of Feyglen; and their breath came mourning from the houſe of woe. A warrior ſaid, 'her brother too has fallen.' The virgin opened her eyes:—A groan was heard. Dalav gently raiſed the ſwan-boſomed maid: He

raiſed

raiſed her with the hand of friendſhip. The thoughts of his breaſt had been before of her; but he knew not that the eyes of her love were towards Flaian.—

Give, O ſon of Scarlaw! ſaid the maid,—give me the ſword of Flaian. I will claſp it in my arms in the ſeaſon of ſleep; when my dreams are of him who raiſed it in battle.—

He gave her the ſword.—She kiſſed the bloody ſteel.—The bed of its point was her boſom; Her own hand gave the wound.—She fell on the breaſt of Flaian.—One ſtone is their tomb.

THE

THE

CHIEF OF FEYGLEN*.

THE gray-haired chief of Feyglen leaned to the tree of the ruſtling leaf. The ſpear of his fathers was not near. It roſe high

* Feyglen, *the valley of deers.*—The ſubject of this poem is the ſame as the laſt; and, is ſuppoſed by ſome, to have been compoſed by the ſame bard. This, however, does not appear to be the caſe. There is a great difference in the manner of both poems in the original. The ſcarcity of terms in the Engliſh to expreſs the feelings of grief, martial atchievements, and other incidents with which this poem abounds, contributed much towards deſtroying this difference of manner in the tranſlation.

The moſt probable account which tradition gives of the author of this poem, is, that he was family-bard to the chief whoſe name it bears. He was ſo much affected with the diſtreſſes of his patron, that he took no further notice of the battle deſcribed in the preceding poem, than it was connected with the tragical fall of the houſe which is the ſubject of this

high in the hands of Dowran againſt Loch-lin's race, iſſuing in hoſtile pride from the boſom of the troubled waves.

The golden-haired father of the morning came forth from the back of the eaſtern hill: He came forth in the ſteps of his beauty. The retiring clouds of night fly in haſte from the coming of his glittering beams. The feathered ſons of the foreſt rejoice in the kindneſs of his ſmiles. The ſoft heaving boſom of the mountain-lake, receives with joy the image of his beauty. The courſe of feeble waves is towards the trembling brightneſs. They ſalute it as they paſs; and leave it to adorn the ſurface of ſucceeding waves *.

The rolling of thy dim eyes, O chief of battles! is alſo towards the riſing ſun; but their darkened courſe is along the gloomy vale of black-robed night. The ſmiling beams of the morning are on thy gray hairs; but thine eyes of age behold them not. Darkneſs is before thee; but thy ſoul is the ſeat of light. The feats of former years revolve in the mind of

* No paſſage in the preſent collection has loſt ſo much in the tranſlation, as this deſcription of the ſun ſhining on a lake in a clear morning.

of the hero. The heart of the warrior is great with the deeds of other battles.

Where, ſaid the chief, ah! where are the days of my youth, when I graſped the ſhield of my fathers, and was firſt in the ſtrife of battles? When the ghoſts of the mighty were behind, and the retiring foes of Albin before the glittering of my ſteel? When my ſpear was the ſhield of the feeble, and my ſword the terror of the ſons of ocean? My joy was then in the ſound of Morven's battles, when the race of ſtrangers raiſed ſpears of ſtrength againſt her ſons. But now the ſteel of foes is high, and I oppoſe it not. Morven calls her ſons to battle; but my ſteps are not towards the foe. My feeble arm graſps no child of the furnace. My darkened eyes direct not the courſe of my footſteps. Lonely I ſit beneath the tree of the trembling leaf!

Let the ſpear of my fathers be a meteor of death in thy hands, O Dowran, ſon of my youth! Be thou the ſhield of thy father's fame; and let the falling of my gray hairs rejoice in the ſound of thy battles.

Who

Who comes in the noiſe of the ruſtling heath? Are thy ſteps from the ſtrife of heroes? Stop the foot of thy ſpeed, ſon of haſte, and tell how warriors fought. Was Dowran forward in the bloody conteſt? Were his ſteps among the broken ſhields of the foe? Did ſpears of ſtrength ſink before him? Fled the mighty from the weight of his ſteel? Speak, tongue of the tale; for the darkened eyes of Feyglen behold no more the deeds of heroes.

As the rolling of the huge ſtone down the haughty brow of Morcraig, when the affrighted flocks ſtretch every nerve to ſhun the coming danger, and the torn heath is round the whirling of its rapid journey; ſo bold, ſo ſtrong, ſo terrible was the ſon of Feyglen, in the fields of death. The mighty ſaw the coming of his ſtrength, and they ſank beneath the weight of his ſword. The feeble fled the danger they could not meet. Albin's ſons rejoiced in his deeds as they filled his footſteps behind.

Such was the rolling of his might, when the ſhield of Swanvil met the point of his ſpear. Stop—ſaid the chief of Lochlin; and let the collected

collected ſtrength of thy arm be in the darting of thy lance. Strong is the ſhield before thee, and mighty is the arm that ſupports the glittering wing of ſteel. My ſword triumphs not in the fall of little men. I mourn when feeble foes are before me. But thy fame is great, O warrior! Thy coming in battle is like the coming of a hundred ſtreams, when their foaming journey is down the ſhaggy brow of the haughty rock. We have both been renowned; but a gray ſtone will lift its moſſy head on the hill before the ſtorms of other years. The hunter, as he paſſeth, will cry, 'Here the mighty fought.' If my ſword becomes thine, ſend it, O warrior, to Savina. Her ſoft-rolling eye meets the riſing ſun on the plains of Tauron. The maid will pierce her boſom with the point, and our ghoſts will rejoice in the land of clouds.

No ſteel from me ſhall pierce the boſom of the lovely, ſaid Dowran. Yield, warrior, and return in ſafety to Savina. Her mild eye will view thee with joy, and bleſs the hand that ſpared thee in battle.

In vain haſt thou ſpoke, ſon of pride! Perſuaſive ſweetneſs is not thine.—Thy words are feeble, like the blaſt that holds a conteſt with a ſtubborn rock. Did the points of five hundred ſpears meet my ſhield; did the ſtrength of a hundred warriors raiſe each ſpear; did the meteors of death fly around me, as the fire of heaven, when burſting clouds roll in horror through the angry ſky;—yet would I not yield.

* Two blue ſteels roſe in wrath. Dowran ſtood alone. Many ſons of Lochlin came behind. A bloody ſtream was ſeen.—Swanvil ſtopped the unequal ſtrife. The thoughts of the valiant darted on his ſoul. He curſed the coward's ſpear!

Dowran

* *Le naidhe dh'eirich da lann ghorm, &c.* This paſſage hath been admired in the original, as comprehending more ſubſtance in a certain number of words, than any other poem extant. I have endeavoured to imitate the ſhortneſs of the periods in the original, though I am conſcious that I have fallen ſhort of its dignity. The Galic reader, however, will find, that no idea hath been totally loſt, though but faintly expreſſed.

Dowran fell not alone. On either ſide they bleed. The ſpear is the pillar of his bloody ſide. His ſhield rolls on earth. Terrible are the threatening looks of the hero. The foe viewed, and trembled. Ghoſts fled from the fallen around. Terrified, they mount the clouds that paſs. We heard the warrior's groans. Too late we raiſed the ſpear. Many ſank with the hero: The reſt fled in haſte. Swanvil ſcorned our ſtrength. He fought the ſword of Scarlaw. But what ſon of ſong can relate the meeting of the two chiefs! Rocks ſpoke the words of ſteel. The broken ſhield ſank from Swanvil. His ſpear ſhall riſe no more.—The race of Lochlin fled. The blaſt is their ſhield, as they mount the blue rolling waves.

The aged Feyglen liſtened in the anguiſh of his ſoul to the tale of woe. A tear wanders down his wrinkled cheek. He claſps his hands in grief. Many groans come forth.—Mournful are his words.

A blaſt has withered the plains. A cloud has darkened the ſky.—Joy meet the ſoul of the valiant. Never ſhall the ſpear of my fathers

thers riſe in battle! I ſhall vaniſh, like a dim ſhadow that wanders before the rays of the moon. No ſon of mine ſhall raiſe the huge ſtone near my narrow dwelling. My name ſhall ceaſe to ſound in the years that approach. My departure ſhall be as the blaſt that flies unheeded over the mountains.—A ſudden beam of comfort ruſhes on my ſoul. Sulalin, image of her who was lovely! reach me thy white hand. Gather thy waving locks from the wind. Dry thy father's cheek with thy ſoft ringlets. A tear from thy blue eyes ſhall bathe my memory on the mountains. A plant may riſe from thy ſide. The ſpear of Feyglen may yet riſe in battle.—A ray of comfort ruſhes on the wretched. Forgot I ſhall not be, ſoft beam of youth!

The chief ſtretched forth his hand. But he ſtretched it to the wind.—No white arm received it: No ſoft voice was heard.—A blaſt that withers ruſhed through his nerves. He trembled as a feeble twig before the haughty ſtorm. Breeze after breeze ſaluted the woods; but the gray-haired Feyglen liſtened in vain.

—The

—The ſoft voice of Sulalin is not mingled with the wind.

A black cloud is gathering in the eaſt. Why do the oaks bend their green heads before it? Why do the rocks rear their cliffy brows to meet it in wrath?—A hundred ſighs are heard, as it flies in ſurly ſpeed over the mountains. The tears of heroes pour forth before it. The death of the lovely has darkened its gloomy aſpect. The fold of the cloud is the wing of a tale of woe.

Bathe thy dim eyes in tears, chief of the aged locks!—She who was bright in thy hall, ſleeps cold in death. The ghoſt of the virgin roſe on the faireſt beam of the morning. The ſon of Scarlaw is the partner of her flight to the land of clouds. Piercing are thy words, ſon of the mournful tale.—But the eyes of Shearvan have already ſhed all their tears: His feeble breaſt hath already poured forth all its ſighs. The rocks of Ardven have heard it, and returned their groans of pity.—But thou travelleſt in thy mirth, O ſon of heaven! regardleſs of my woes. And long mayeſt thou rejoice in thy blue fields, thou brighteſt tenant of

of the ſky! The children of an hundred glens look with the eye of expectation for the coming forth of thy beauty, though the darkened eyes of Shearvan refuſe to admit thy beams. But ſome day, like me, they will look in vain. Stormy clouds will wrap thee in their dark folds, when the battles of many ghoſts are in thy land. Thou wilt then, like me, weep; but the wrathful winds will not regard thee.

But roll on, in all the ſtrength of thy brightneſs, fair-haired traveller of the ſky! Carry with thee all thy ſmiles to cheer the valiant who ſleep in the Iſle of Peace. The courſe of thy ſpeed all day is towards them. The angry ſtorms terrify not thee. Sullen clouds may veil thy beauty; but they cannot oppoſe thee. The couch of thy repoſe is with the ghoſts of our fathers. There thou layeſt down thy fair head to reſt; and the feeble children of the wind ſleep among the golden locks of thy beauty.

O Sulalin! when other ghoſts are aſleep, ſteal thou in ſecret to the dreams of thy father. Tell me if Culoina has forgot me in the ſeaſon

of

of my gray hairs; ſhe who had ſeen me in the days of my ſtrength. But my ſtrength is fled, like a blaſt to the deſart: My friends have vaniſhed as the miſt on Ardven. Heavy are mine eyes of age! leave me to my reſt, ye tenants of the hills.—Come, Sulalin! to the dreams of my ſlumbers.

Such were the words of the chief in the ſeaſon of his woe. The voice of his grief was heard no more: His ſighs ceaſed to mingle with the wind. His tomb liſts its head high on Ardven. The traveller liſtens to his tale with ſtreaming eyes:—For he fell, like the laſt tree of the foreſt, when no plant remains to tell the place where it ſtood.

THE

THE CAVE OF CREYLA *.

COLD was the blaſt from the regions of froſt, and fatal proved the ſurly offſpring of the north to the feeble reapers of the flowery field. Legions of inſects periſhed by the poiſonous breath of the reigning ſtorm. The feathered ſongſter ſtopped the warbling note at the frowning approach of the rude intruder.

The Father of light withdrew his circular preſence beyond the ſouthern hill. Feeble were his oblique rays, which, half intercepted, dimly

* Creyla, *the woody rock*, ſuppoſed to be one of the Grampian hills which ſtill retains that name.

The ſcene of this poem is ſaid to have been in that valley round the head of the river Spey, which is, at preſent, known by the name of Eha-dianach, or Badenoch, *the ſecure valley*.

dimly ſhone o'er the tops of the mountains. The congealer of the liquid ſtream, who annually retires beyond the northern ocean, further than the cleavers of the waves can trace his rapid flight, returned from his ſummer expedition. He now began to uſurp his tyrannical reign, in the abſence of the fire of brightneſs, whoſe preſence he would have ſhunned with a ſpeed equal to his who flies from impending deſtruction. Nature trembles at the approach of the cruel ſpoiler; and the feeble among her ſons fall victims to the reſiſtleſs oppreſſor. He locks up the ſtream from the ſhaggy tenants of the foreſt; and the finny inhabitants of the flood dwell in darkneſs, while in vain they ſearch for the intercepted day.

Such was the ſeaſon, and diſmal was the viſage of the mountains, when Liachan led his ſix ſons to the cave of Creyla: The frozen offspring of the ſky had cloſed up the unfrequented entrance: But an impending cliff, which projected from the mother rock, contended with the paſſing blaſt; and the murmuring noiſe pointed out the door of the cave

* Lia-chean, *gray head.*

to the trembling leader of the youthful band.

Thrice did Liachan bleſs the lonely cavern as he entered, and thrice did the flinty pillars of the rock, with their echoing voices, return the friendly ſalutation through the hollow centre. The well-known cave recalled to the remembrance of the ſage the companions of his youth, when he retired from danger to this gloomy cell. A deep ſigh iſſued from his aged boſom, when his mind rolled back to the deeds of other years. He dropt the tear of affection to the memory of his departed friends.

Ranal, the laſt born ſon of his father, the ſwift aſcender of the hill, miſconſtruing the cauſe of the trembling tear, opened his mouth, and pronounced the words of comfort to his diſconſolate ſire.

Why dwells muteneſs on the tongue, which was wont to claim attention, when the formers of the ring round the burning ourd, * harkened

* The ourd is the trunk of a large tree ſet on fire, round which the Highlanders ſolemnize particular feſtivals; a cuſtom rigidly obſerved at this day, in many parts of the Highlands,

kened to the words of inſtruction? Welcome was the lovely offspring of thy mouth to the liſtning croud. Even the venerable bard, the ruler of the human heart, increaſed his knowledge, when he lent the ear of attention to the manly ſtrains which iſſued from the lips of Liachan. Why then ſits the emblem of remorſe on the brow on which the induſtrious propagators of ſlander could not trace the image of guilt? If the trembling viſage of fear, which was wont to be a ſtranger to thy breaſt, has paid thee an unaccuſtomed viſit, ſpurn from thy boſom with a ſmile the ungracious gueſt. Though thy feeble hand cannot graſp the weapons of reſiſtance, ſtrong ought to be that arm which unſheathes the ſword to attack

Highlands, where the ourd is annually provided for Chriſtmas eve, and the firſt night of the new year. Some traditions in the Galic language repreſent this cuſtom as a monument raiſed from the ruins of barbariſm, and inform us, that the fire-wood which the ſons of cruelty were accuſtomed to provide, in the days of idolatry, to ſacrifice human victims to imaginary deities, was afterwards happily converted into the ourd, to raiſe the voice of mirth in the hall, while the bards ſung the deeds of heroes.

tack thee; for none of Liachan's ſons, in the hour of danger, ever purchaſed their ſafety by retreat.

Stop, Ranal, ſaid Liachan, theſe tears are not the offſpring of fear; thou art a ſtranger to the cauſe. Thy ſympathiſing eyes ſhall alſo yield their tributary drop, as ſoon as thou knoweſt the ſource from which they flow. The tale is unknown on the banks of the Tay *. I have wrapped it up with the finger of ſecrecy, till the nerves of my children gained ſtrength to redeem their juſt rights by the glittering ſon of the furnace. Draw hither, my ſons, and liſten with the ears of attention to the unfeigned words of Liachan. Learn from them to avoid the follies of youth; ſo ſhall the tears of age never bedew your wrinkled cheeks.

But firſt let the ſpark of thy ſteel, Callan, diſpel the gloom of the cave. Stop thou the ſpeed of the ſtag, Ranal. The oaks of Creyla are many: Let a withered trunk blaze before me. But ſpare the feeble plant: Let the youthful branches wave in the wind. The ſummer's

* *Tadh* from *Fladh*, the kindly ſtream.

ſummer's ſun will yet return, and ſmile upon their tender leaves. The bounty of the ſpring will increaſe their ſtrength; and warriors yet unheard of, will rejoice round their flames in diſtant years.—

The arrow of Ranal pierced a ſtag. The ſword of Callan brought the fire from the rock.—Trees fell before Aſpar; and why ſhould Altban, Duchan, and Ogier, be forgot? —They were not idle.

Long had the frowning viſage of darkneſs been the gloomy tenant of the cave: But the flaming breath of the oaks now expelled the ungracious intruder. A ſmile ſhone on the flinty cliffs. The chief viewed them, and ſighed. —The image of the lovely half-appeared. He thought of the beam that had ſet.

In vain, ſays Callan, have we ſpread the feaſt: In vain hath the friendly oak blazed before thee. Thy dim eyes wander o'er the cave in ſorrow: The tear of woe comes glittering forth.

And let them come, ſaid Liachan.—The drop on one cheek bathes the memory of thy mother:

mother: The offspring of the other eye is for the fate of him, who has no ſon to warm his cave in the days of his gray hairs.—The ſtorms that travel o'er the mountains reach not me. Your friendſhip hath ſpread joyful ſmiles round my cave; but cold is the ſeat of him who hath loſt his ſons in the days of his youth.

I aſk for light, and it ſhines:—He aſks for light, and darkneſs is around him. My ſtag lies by the flame of my oaks: His ſtag flies abroad in the foreſt. No ſon of his purſues it with the footſteps of ſpeed.—I am warm, and the aſſiduity of my ſons is round me; but he is cold, and his pale cheek leans againſt a pillar of ice.—Alas, ſon of age! wert thou near, my children ſhould warm thy cave alſo.——

The arm of my father Tomduth was the ſhield of my feeble years. In ſafety I roſe behind it, like the tender ſhrub that rears its ſoft head near the ſtately oak. The blaſt on either ſide frowns in vain: The ſtrength of many years meets it. The courſe of its flight is backwards, and the ſound of its wrath is heard

heard on distant rocks. So fled the foes of Inver * from the sword of Tomduth.

As Trombia † in her hollow bed gathers her liquid strength from the fertile nerves of a thousand crystal rills, extending their winding arms round the heathy mountains; so gathered the evening the flocks of Tomduth to the plains of Elian.

The meeting of warriors was in the hall of Inver. Benvel ‡ struck the harp to the fame of departed heroes, and implanted the image of valour in the vacant breast of the rising generation. Hospitality stood at the outer gate, and with the finger of invitation waved to the traveller as he passed on his way. The chief stood unequalled in wisdom and valour. The venerable bard raised his voice to proclaim it. But where is the strength of the chief? Where the music of the bard?—Tomduth lies unactive

* *In-bher* signifies a place where a lesser river joins a greater, or empties itself into the ocean. All the towns in Scotland, whose names begin with *Inver*, are thus situated, as *Inver-ness*, *Inver-ary*, *Inver-keithing*, &c.

† Trom-bidh, *heavy stream*, a river which owes its birth to a lake in the valley of Gaoig, and empties itself into the Spey, a little below Ruthven.

‡ Bein-bheal, *sweet voiced*.

active in the tomb of Killmore *. Eternal muteneſs reigns on the quivering tongue of Benvel. The father of the ſong ſhall no more be heard at the feaſt of Balden †.

The chief retired not like a miſty cloud before the face of the blaſt. He foreſaw his fall; and his ſon received the words of inſtruction.

Liachan, I am old.—The meteors of death have warned me to depart ‡. I go to viſit the

* *Cill* ſignifies a place of interment. St Andrew's is at preſent known by no other name in the Galic than Cillrihhen, *the royal burial-place.*

† The modern Beltane is but a corruption of this word. The feaſt was kept on the firſt day of ſummer. A particular kind of bread uſed at it, is ſtill made in ſeveral parts of the Highlands at this day. The leaven, before it is fired, is ſpread on both ſides with a liquid, compoſed of yolks of eggs, ſweet cream, butter, &c. If any family neglects to uſe this bread, on that day, it is poſitively aſſerted, that their flocks will diminiſh that year; and ſeveral precedents are produced to authenticate the fact.—So effectually has ſuperſtition conſecrated this cuſtom.

‡ The inhabitants of different parts of the Highlands give different accounts of theſe meteors of death. The moſt curious are thoſe of the people round the river Spey. The meteor here does not, as in other places, appear like fire

the ghosts of our fathers. Come to the rocks of Creyla: Receive an asylum sacred to the chief of Inver.

The warrior was bright in the armour of his fathers: But the liquid sons of sorrow rushed to my eyes, and concealed him from my eager view. My throat denied a passage to the thoughts of my breast; they were big, and could only find their passage by halves. Words, at last, were formed from the broken accents.

fire flying in the air; but is heard with a feeble voice, slowly traversing the path which the funeral is to pass, and is called *Tachran*. Persons are said to be deaf to the noise of their own Tachran, though others hear it so distinctly, that they can trace its progress to the house from which the funeral is soon to proceed.

The Tachrans are very different from the ghosts, as they are never known to do any harm; for, if a person pursues them, they always retire.

Persons, whose veracity cannot be called in question in other matters, relate unaccountable stories concerning them, to which they declare themselves to have been witnesses.—This furnishes an instance of the unbounded power which superstition maintains over the mind; and displays the force of that rhetoric by which she persuades the human race to become her votaries, in whatever preposterous garb she chuses to appear.

—We paſſed thro' the glen of Elian.—The wind of the north came ruſhing o'er the heath, and rattled on the armour of Tomduth as it paſſed: The armour of Tomduth regarded it not; and we reached the cave of Creyla, as if quietneſs had been the ruler of the night.

Tomduth was tall: He leaned upon his half-erected ſpear as he entered. The ſpear ſaluted the threſhold. Fire fled the daughter of the rock, at the embrace of the ſteel. The flinty ſiſters of the cave echoed a chorus to the ſound, to welcome the chief, the only viſitor of the lonely cell.

This cave, ſaid Tomduth, is hitherto unknown to the ſons of the heath. Let it protect the feeble of thy race, if thy foes ſhall urge the conteſt; but ſeek not thy own ſafety in concealment. Fly not in the face of danger; nor tremble when the meteors of death are around thee. Be not the firſt to draw, nor the firſt to ſheath the ſword. Avoid not the combat with the mighty; but ſhun the ignoble conteſt. Let thy face be to the ſtrong, and thy back to the feeble foe.

Make

Make not the daughter of Dungeal * the mother of thy ſons. Poiſon not the offspring of thy loins by mingling in their compoſition the juice of a baneful plant. Let the milky food of their infant days be derived from a pure fountain: So ſhall they be defended from the weeds which corrupt the heart.

The words of inſtruction were ended; and the daughters of the rock ceaſed to enforce the precepts of the chief. Muteneſs was in the cave; and nought was heard but the voice of night, which in hoarſe accents ſaluted the rocks as it paſſed.

The tomb of the chief roſe on Killmore: Benvel's ſong of woe was heard round the ourd. The tear of beauty bedewed the cheek of the virgin: Warriors ſhook their dejected heads as they met. Rocks joined in pity the ſound of grief: Each breeze was the meſſenger of a tale of woe.

Stormal

* Dun-geal, *white tower*—The houſe of Dungeal are ſaid to have been the progenitors of the Cummings, lords of Badenoch, whoſe tranſactions are ſo well known in the hiſtory of Scotland.

Stormal was the ſtately ſon of Dungeal. He led the warriors of his father to battle. The arrow of random fled not from his bow. She continued her journey to the diſtant mark; and fatal proved her arrival to the breaſt of the foe.

Sulgorma * was the ſeat of a thouſand beauties. Many heroes wooed the maid; but the thoughts of her dreams were of Liachan, though I regarded not the kindly glances of her blue eyes.—So look the wiſhing eyes of the bewildered traveller in ſearch of the intercepted beams, when the loaded ſky leans her burden of miſt on the hills of Minaig. But the ungrateful tenant of the enlightened vale views, with eyes of indifference, the bountiful favours of the Father of light.

The feaſt of Balden was ſpread at Dungeal. Bards ſung the tales of love.—I forgot the words of inſtruction, and opened my eyes to the beauties of Sulgorma. I looked in kindneſs on the maid, and ſaw her clothed in lovelineſs. Our meetings were often in ſecret, and we

* Sul-gorm, *blue-eyed.*

we thought of each other in the ſeaſon of dreams.

Benvel ſaw my love for Sulgorma, and the friendly reſentment of his breaſt awaked.—— Son of Tomduth, ſaid the bard, departed is the fame of thy houſe! The words of inſtruction thou haſt regarded as the blaſt that flies o'er the mountains.— Luachos, of the race of bards, bring my harp, and place my partner in danger by my ſide. I will wander to other lands. Too long hath my ſong been heard at Inver.

Son of the days of old, ſaid I, weighty are thy words. Feeble is the breath of unripened years; and fruitleſs are her efforts when arrogantly ſhe endeavours to oppoſe the offspring of thy mouth. Thy tongue has given birth to piercing words; but Liachan ſtands reproved by the frowns of friendſhip. Were the beauties of Sulgorma as the ſun of heaven in the infancy of day, never ſhould ſhe ſhine in the hall of Inver.

Malalin * of the graceful eye, the beautiful daughter of the chief of Ervin, mourned the fall

* Mal-alin, *graceful eye-brow.*—Er-bhin, *weſtern hill.*

fall of her father. The emblem of grief ſat on her cheek. I bleſſed the maid of woe, and brought her to the hall of my fathers.

Stormal heard the ſecret ſigh of Sulgorma, and raiſed his threatening ſpear. Many were his warriors, and weighty was his ſword in the day of death. I gathered the ſtrength of Inver to oppoſe him; but feeble proved my arm in every conteſt; for my ſpear was raiſed againſt an injured foe.

Many were the years of our ſtrife; and many the deaths of our warriors. When the force of Inver failed, I brought Malalin to the cave of Creyla *. The ſafety of my ſons was her care. I ſlew the deer of the deſart, and carried them to our feaſt.

But, bleſſed be the ſoul of her who feaſts no more in my cave!—When the daughter of Ervin retired to the land of ghoſts, I carried my ſons to the tower of the woody vale, by the ſide

* It was cuſtomary for every great family to have a ſecret cave, or place of concealment from their enemies, when they were forced to fly in battle. The veſtiges of ſome of theſe caves are ſtill to be ſeen; but, when once they became known, they were of no further uſe.

ſide of the friendly ſtream. There Gildea * wiped the tear of grief from mine eye. My ſons roſe like the young plants of the foreſt. Their hills are many round the ſtreams of Speymore; and their arms are now ſtrong to fight the battles of Inver againſt the intruding race of Dungeal.

* Of Gill *a ſervant*, and Dea *God*.—The *Gilliadea*, *i. e. ſervants of God*, mentioned in antient poetry, is the true origin of what was afterwards corrupted, by writers who underſtood not the language, into *Kelledei*, or *Culdees*.

An explanation of ſome ſirnames in Scotland will put the truth of this beyond a doubt. Gilchriſt, *Chriſt's ſervant*; Gilleſpie, *the Biſhop's ſervant*; Gilmore, *the great ſervant*, &c.

COLMALA

COLMALA AND ORWI*.

WHY does the tear of woe trickle down the wrinkled cheek of Chrimor?—Often has the ſtranger feaſted in his hall; when the ſhell of mirth went round, and bards ſung the warriors of other days. His friends are many in other lands, but mournful is the chief. His mighty ſon ſleeps among the waves, and the ſoul of the aged is ſad.—

Colmala and Orwi, the maids of the hill of hinds, were clothed with lovelineſs: The locks of their beauty flew on the wings of the wind. White was the heaving of two fair boſoms behind their poliſhed bows. Often had they led their father's hounds to the chace; for the old hero ſat lonely in his hall, and mourned the fall of all his ſons.

Many

* Col-mhalla, *ſmall eye-brow.*—Or-bhiedh, *yellow locks.* Chri-mor, *great ſoul.*—Fer-gutb, *the man of the word.*

Many warriors followed the daughters of beauty to the chace, and poured forth their ſighs in ſecret. But warriors ſighed in vain; for one was their love, and ſtately was he! the mighty ſon of Chrimor. The friendly beams of both their ſoft eyes were towards the hunter; but fixed was his love on Colmala, the maid of the raven locks.

Daughter of my father, ſaid Orwi, thou love of Fergus! death is at my heart I feel it there, my friend.—Wilt thou raiſe a tomb o'er the unhappy?—My father is old, and thou art the choice of my hunter. He will, perhaps, aid thee, and give a ſtone. So ſhall Orwi ſleep in peace; nor ſhall her pale ghoſt wander among the clouds of ſtormy night, when the north pours its frozen venom on the lifeleſs plains.

Alas! Orwi, thou ſiſter of my love, why ſo pale?—What ſhall Colmala do, to draw death from thy boſom?—Thou muſt not fall in the ſtrength of thy beauty, thou graceful bearer of the bow!

But ſoon ſhall I ceaſe to bear the bow.—My life is in the mountain-aſh, that rears its

lofty head on ſea-ſurrounded Tonmore *. The crimſon fruit of the red-haired tree is in bloom. One branch would ſave the life of Orwi:—But no hunter is her's, and the ſons of little men ſhun the iſle of death with horror:—No brother of love to raiſe his white ſails, and bring life to Orwi over the waves.—I fall unheeded on the plain: Raiſe the tomb of the unhappy, thou ſiſter of Orwi!

Yes, Orwi! thy tomb ſhall riſe:—But the ſon of thy ſon ſhall raiſe it. A red haired branch of the mountain-aſh ſhall travel over many

* Tonn-mor, *the iſle of great waves*, is ſaid to have been one of the Orcades, then in the poſſeſſion of the Norwegians. The inhabitants had been told by their bards, that, if ſtrangers ſaw the beautiful berries of their mountain-aſh, they would thereby be tempted to invade their country; and, with a pretenſion to foreknowledge peculiar to the times, aſſured them, that, if a branch of it was carried from their iſland, they ſhould be no longer a people. The populace, always liable to be deceived, and ever ready to enliſt under the banner of ſuperſtition, ſaw clearly the propriety of this prediction; and, in the heat of enthuſiaſtical zeal, took precautions againſt it in a more auſtere manner, than perhaps the bards at firſt intended, by killing every ſtranger who came to the iſland.

many ſeas to the maid of the yellow locks. Fergus lifts the ſpear of the mighty; and he will bring it from the iſle of death.

Colmala bore the groans of Orwi to the youth of her love. He ſighed for the ſickly maid:—He called his warriors from his hundred glens. The ſons of battle graſped their maſſy ſwords. He ruſhed in the ſtrength of his dark ſhips into the blue plains of ocean; and raiſed the ſpreading wings of his ſpeed before the wind. Many ſeas he paſſed; and the joy of his ſoul was great when the iſle of Tonmore roſe on the top of the waves.

Whence is the ſpeed of the ſtrangers, ſaid Anver, the gloomy chief of Tonmore?

From Innif-gaul *, the land of many iſles, we come.—A mountain-aſh bends over thy rocks: The fame of the red-haired plant has travelled over many ſeas. The life of a virgin is in the taſte of the crimſon fruit. Yield a branch to the maid of woe, thou chief of Tonmore;

* Innis-ghaull, *the iſlands of ſtrangers.* The weſtern iſles are, at this day, known by that name in the Galic. The ſtrangers here alluded to, are the Danes, who appear to have been in poſſeſſion of theſe iſles for ſome centuries.

Tonmore; and the mighty ſhall be thy friends in the woody ſtraths of Albin.

In vain have ye paſſed o'er many ſeas, ye ſons of Innis-gaul! Did the ſtrength of all your land appear, the ſtrength of all your land were in vain. No branch of the ſacred tree ſhall ever travel to the land of ſtrangers. Unhappy are they who aſk it:—Never more ſhall they return to the hall of their fathers. Unhappy are ye, ſons of the ſea; for never more ſhall ye raiſe your white wings of ſpeed.—Bring my ſword of the heavy wounds.—Gather my warriors with their ſpears of ſtrength.—Raiſe the ſign of death on Luman. Let the ſons of the ſtrangers fall in their blood.

Fergus raiſed his terrible voice; nor ſilent ſtood the rocks of Tonmore. They foreſaw the death of their people, and the ſigh of woe iſſued from the hardeſt flint.—But pleaſant are the words of the chief to the riſing wrath of his faithful warriors.

Ye have heard the words of the ſurly: My friends! we are in the land of death. Shall we ſink like the harmleſs roe before the ſpear of the

the hunter? Shall we fall like the tender lily of the vale before the blaſt of the north?—Yes, my friends, we may fall: But the aged chief of Strathmore ſhall not bluſh for his people.

Then Fergus raiſed his boſſy ſhield, and ſhook his ſpear of death. His warriors gathered around, like a rock that gathers ſtrength to meet the ſtorm. The ſons of Tonmore fell in blood. The ſpear of Fergus was a meteor of death. The ſurly king ſhrunk from its wrath,—Fly to thy gloomy hall, thou leader of the feeble! Fergus ſcorns thy death;—it would darken his battles.

The chief of Tonmore is overcome, and bound: His people are diſperſed.—The mountain-aſh falls on the plains of death. Ten warriors bear it to the dark ſhips of Fergus.—He raiſed his wings of ſpeed. The wind came from the north; but it came in wrath, and arouſed the ſable ſurges from their ſullen ſleep.

The tear of the cloud flies on the blaſt: Waves rear their green heads to meet it. The fire of heaven darts over the waves. The

battles

battles of ghoſts are in the ſky. Liquid mountains raiſe their white locks before the wrath of the ſtorm: Brown rocks gather ſtrength to meet them. Proud billows ſpend their rage on the cliffy ſhore: Their retiring groans are terrible. The peaſant hears it, and rejoices in his ſafety. The ſtag ſtarts by times from his heathy couch. The eagle dreams of his fluttering prey. The cropers of the flowery field are half awake. The drouſy eye-lids of the feathered flock are open. Half-extended, wings lean on the wind:—The dread of ſurrounding gloom prevents their flight.

The wearied ſtorm now makes a pauſe.—Clouds lean their empty breaſts on the mountains. Winds ceaſe to roar, and trees to bend beneath their fury. The breath of night is ſilent. The waving heath now ſleeps in peace, or trembles before the intermitting breeze.

The moon looks forth from the ſkirts of a dark cloud: The tear of the lovely glitters in the beam. Colmala mourns on the ſhore of the iſle of oaks. Her long ſhadow wanders from rock to rock. Her raven-hair ſighs in the gale: Her variegated garment flutters in

the

the wind.—Two black eyes roll in sorrow o'er the foaming deep; but the floating oak of her lover mounts not the rising billows.

Blast followed blast. Cloud rolled on cloud. Star after star went to rest in the west. But no bold prow came cleaving the face of the deep.—A hundred times fancy saw the bark: A hundred times it proved a surge of ocean.

A sail at last reared its nodding head before the moon. A shadow rolls from wave to wave. Stars are hid behind its folds. A freshning gale swelled the sail, and added to its speed.—The tear of the virgin ceased. A beam of joy rushed on her soul:—She blessed the strength of the oak.

A threatening rock raised its dark head: The furious waves are repelled. The wind is behind the bark: The rock meets it in wrath.—The sail nods no more.—A hundred screams are heard.—Colmala re-echoed the sound. Her piercing cries rend the air: Her white bosom meets the flood. The lover can receive no aid; nor will the maid survive him. Sea-wolves tear her beauteous limbs:—Her ghost rushed

rushed through the flood. Two dim forms rose from a wave; they mount a misty cloud. Often they return from their dwelling in the sky.—The mariner shuns with horror the rock of death, near the verge of ocean's wing *.

THE

* It was observed, in honour to the Caledonians, by a gentleman well acquainted with their antient poetry, that no private discord ever subsisted among the offspring of the same family. The present poem furnishes an instance to the contrary; as the destruction of Fergus, and disappointment of her sister, was the design of Orwi, whose subsequent history the bard passes over with that contemptuous neglect which her character deserves. In alleviation of this lady's crime, however, let it be remembered, that she is entitled to make the same defence so often made for others in her situation; she was in love, and disappointed. Although this apology cannot take off the odium with which her character is clogged, it places it in a more favourable light, than if she had been actuated by mercenary views.

THE

OLD BARD's WISH*.

O Place me by the ſide of the murmuring rill, that gently glides with downward-rolling pace! Lay my head in the ſhade of the ſpreading branches, and be thy friendly beams, O ſun! in kindneſs around me.—There at eaſe let my ſide embrace the green graſs on the bank of the flowery garb, and let me taſte the friendſhip of the breeze as it paſſes. Let my

* Tradition does not pretend to give the name of the author of this poem.—Thoſe who rehearſe it, at preſent, in the Highlands, differ with reſpect to the arrangement. Compoſitions of a paſtoral ſtrain, are more liable to this confuſion, than thoſe of a narrative; as one part leads to another. The reader will find the preſent verſion different from that of Mr M'Donald's, who lately publiſhed the original in his collection of Galic poems; but the Tranſlator has adopted that which appeared the moſt rational.

feet, bathed in the cryſtal flood, feel the ſtruggling efforts of the yielding ſtream in its haſty journey.

Let the lily of pureſt complexion ſmile near me on the yielding ſtalk; and the trembling dew glitter on the waving locks of my verdant ſeat. Let my hand recline on the daiſied turff, and let the fragrant thyme be the pillow of my leaning cheek.

Round on the high erected brows of my glen, let the hawthorn ſpread its blooming boughs, and the little children of the buſhes rejoice in the ſongs of their love, repeated by the inviſible tenants of the rock.

Burſting from the opening jaws of the bird-haunted rock, let the new-born ſpring ſing melodious notes in a mournful tone; and let the hidden ſons of the rock, from their hollow caverns, join the muſic of the ſounding ſtream.

Let the variegated hills, and the wide extended dales, re-echoe the voice of the joyful flocks, while a hundred lowings are heard from the ſides of ſurrounding vallies.

Borne

Borne on the wings of the paſſing breeze, let the gentle voice of the ſportive lamb ſalute my ear; and come, thou little kid, from the rocks, and ſleep in ſafety within the folds of my arms.

O let the haſty ſteps of the hunter be near me, with the rattling noiſe of his darts, and his hounds ruſhing along the extended heath! A beam of youth will glitter on my cheek, when the ſtag-hunting noiſe ſhall ariſe.

When the panting breath of dogs and youths is round me, the marrow of my bones will revive; and, when the fall of the ſtag is proclaimed, my heels ſhall leap in joy along the tops of the mountains.

Then ſhall I meet the hound, my companion in the chace, when the rocks were wont to anſwer to the voice of the horn. I will enter the friendly cave, to whoſe hoſpitable door we bent our ſteps at the approach of night.—Chearfulneſs ſmiled round the gleam of our oaks: In the joys of our cups there was much mirth. The aſcending ſmoke was from the feaſt of deer: Our drink from the ſtream of

Triga.

Triga *: Tho' ghosts had shrieked, and fairies screamed from their green hillocks, safe below the protecting roof of the cave, sweet was our repose.

What hill can vie with thee, O Beinard †, thou chief of a thousand hills! The dreams of flags are in thy locks. Thy head is the bed of clouds.

Scurait rears his cliffy head near. The waving tops of a thousand green firs nod on his brows. The voice of the cuckow mingles with the soft blast that travels in kindness through the sky. The peasant hears it, and rejoices in

* Triga, *the stream which forsakes the hills.*

† Bein-ard, *high mountain.*—The word *mountain* is used here not as a proper explanation of *Bein*, but because the English can furnish no better. That language discovers a great degree of poverty, when we examine those few terms it gives to the various convexities which appear on the surface of the earth. The Galic affords no less than nine names for hills, according to their different shapes and sizes, of which *Bein* is the loftiest. For these the English can only produce two, *hill* and *mountain*.

When objects of this nature frequently occur, there must be a *lameness*; and the bards, by these means, may be blamed for what is evidently the fault of the language into which they are translated.

in the returning ſmiles of ſummer. Early herbs ſhoot forth their green heads. Young roes gather ſtrength. The elk majeſtic ſtrides from hill to hill.

Half-formed waves travel along the ſmooth-faced lake below. Woody iſlands raiſe their green firs before them. The mountain-aſh bends over the flood. The white-boſomed daughter of the ſtream mounts the ſoft billows: Her extended neck riſes on the wandering waves. When ſhe ſpreads her wings above the mountains, her flight is quick from cloud to cloud. Over boiſterous ſeas ſhe travels to other lands, where the cleavers of the wave never raiſed the ſwelling ſail.

On what diſtant ſhore does the wind meet thy mournful ſong, ſon of my youth *! Are thy

* This addreſs of the bard to his abſent ſon, is handed down with ſome difference. Several perſons who rehearſe the reſt of the poem, omit this altogether. Others confuſe it, by repeating it as altogether addreſſed to the ſwan. This miſtake ſeems to ariſe from the ſimilarity of ſound in the two words *Ealla*, ſwan, and *Ghilla*, thou youth.—After the Tranſlator had collected all he could, he found the paſſage ſtill wrapped in obſcurity: Tradition, however, pretends to throw ſome light on it.

The

thy tears for the fallen? Has the white armed daughter of beauty vaniſhed before the eager glances of thy wiſhing eyes?—Peace round the tomb of the lovely!

Come forth from thy dark cave, voice of woe! The beam that is ſet ſhall not return. Ruſh from the womb of the rock. Gather thy floating oaks: Raiſe thy white wings of ſpeed. Mount the high brows of the tumbling waves: Roll in ſwiftneſs before the ſtrength of the travelling blaſt. Come to the banks of my lonely glen. Let me hear thy melodious ſong

The bard, who was himſelf a chief, had an only ſon, who fell deeply in love with Lavinia, the beautiful daughter of Thalbar. Lavinia was drowned as ſhe was bathing in the lake of Triga. Morlav, the bard's ſon, becoming deſperate, from the death of his miſtreſs, ſailed for the Orkney iſles, hoping to fall in the wars of that prince, who was then at variance with the king of Norway. His valour and good conduct, however, gained him great fame; and, after the Norwegians were defeated and expelled the iſles, the prince, in conſideration of his ſervices, and perſonal merit, offered Morlav his daughter in marriage, which he refuſed, and retired to a cave in a lonely iſle, where his father heard he ſtill continued to mourn his loſt Lavinia.

ſong warbling in plaintive accents from thy breaſt of woe. Be thou on the tops of my mountains, and let the mournful tale of thy love be in thy mouth, O youth, who has travelled from the land of green waves! Pour forth thy luxuriant muſic in the boſom of the wind. Attention will ſeize my ears. I will ſnatch thy tale from the ſkirts of the fleeting cloud, when its miſty journey is over the peaceful lake.

Tell me, for my ſight is failed, O wind! where does the reed of the mournful ſound raiſe its waving head? On what fertile mead is the gathering of its ſtrength? Whiſtle among its locks as thou paſſeſt, friendly blaſt, and direct me to its dwelling.

Lend me thy aid, arm of ſtrength! Place me before the kindneſs of the ſun, when his darting favours are from the center of the azure arch. Spread forth thy broad wing, green-robed branch, and be the ſhield of my dim eyes from the fervour of the mid-day blaze. Then come, O memory of the paſt! in the likeneſs of a dream which travels in the ſeaſon of ſtars. Come to the couch of my ſlumbers,

ſlumbers, and refreſh me with the deeds of youth.

Behold, O my ſoul! yon beautiful maid, under the ruſtling wing of the oak, ſtately king of the foreſt! her white hand, the pillar of her glowing cheek, half-hid among the golden ringlets of her flowing hair. The darts from her ſwift rolling eye are towards the happy youth of her love. He leans on her boſom. She liſtens to his ſong in ſilence. The ſoft breeze from his mouth has raiſed a gentle tempeſt. White waves travel along the boſom of the virgin. Love flies from eye to eye. Deers ſtop their courſe on the heath. Their feet forget to move at the ſound of the tale of love.

Now the ſong has ceaſed. The heaving of her white boſom meets the breaſt of her lover; and her lips, like the roſe, bluſhing on the mead, are preſſed by the happy youth.

Happineſs without end to the tender pair, who have awaked in my mind a glimpſe of thoſe pleaſures that ſhall not return! Joy to thy ſoul, lovely virgin of the ſoft-waving locks!

Haſt

Haſt thou forſaken me, happy dream? Return yet one tranſient gleam, O memory of the paſt!—But, alas, thou heardſt me not. Sorrow ruſhes on my ſoul, like the winged blaſt that whiſtles in my aged locks.—Ye mountains who have ſeen my ſtrength, farewell! Farewell, dear companions of my youth! —Ye virgins of the beautiful aſpect, adieu! The joy of ſummer is yours; but my winter ſhall be everlaſting.

O lay me near the hoarſe voice of the falling ſtream, that tumbles in froathy haſte from the cliffy brow; and let the laſt ſhutting of my eyes be ſoftened by the ſoothing ſound. Place my harp, and a full ſhell by my ſide; and let the ſhield that covered my fathers in battle be near.

Come, O cloud, that travels over many ſeas! Bear me on thy miſty wings to the Iſle of Peace, where the heroes of old nod their dim heads in awful ſlumbers. Open the hall where Oſſian and Deal reſide *; for the evening will

* This paſſage furniſhes an inſtance of the vanity to which every claſs of men is liable, when once the popu-

lace

come when the bard ſhall be no more. But, oh! before it comes,—before my ghoſt ſhall travel to Ardven, from whence there is no return, give me the harp, and the ſhell for the journey. Then, my beloved harp and ſhell, —then, farewell *!

lace profeſs themſelves their diſciples. The veneration which mankind entertained for the bards, encouraged that order to carry its pretenſions of ſuperiority to an extraordinary height. They imagined that a magnificent hall was appropriated for them in FLATHINNIS, to which no vulgar ghoſt could be admitted; and that they ſhould there receive the rewards due to the ſtrenuous exertion of their talents while on earth, to reclaim and cultivate the human race.—This opinion, if not rational, ſeems at leaſt natural; for it has made its appearance among another claſs of men, who pretend to be directed by infallible rules.

* A palpable contradiction appears in this paragraph, which, however, a knowledge of the opinions of the antients will help to explain. It was imagined, that the ghoſts of departed friends came to conduct the ſpirit of the deceaſed to *Flathinnis*. As theſe ghoſts were ſuppoſed to be ſtill ſuſceptible of the pleaſures which they enjoyed while on earth, muſic, and the liquor which they drank out of the ſhell, were provided in great plenty on theſe occaſions, in order that they might take a ſufficient quantity

tity of food and mirth, to enable them to perform their journey to paradife with the more alacrity. If a deficiency was found in the entertainment, the ghofts were to be revenged on thofe whofe bufinefs it was to have provided it properly. Thus it became facrilege to have a funeral ill provided. The bard here defires the harp and fhell to be ready to entertain his departed friends, and then bids them farewell, as he would have no further occafion for them.

DUCHOIL's

DUCHOIL's ELEGY*.

NO feeble voice is thine, ſon of death! No boy's ſtaff is thy dart. The mighty overcome in battle; but they ſink before thee. No ſhield can meet thy ſpear: No arm can oppoſe thy ſtrength. All the heroes of former days have dropt into the grave at thy nod!

The mighty bend before thee with the feeble; but they ſhall not, like them, be forgot

* Duth-choil, *black wood*—This chief is much celebrated by tradition for his hoſpitality to ſtrangers, for whom he always kept open table. It is ſaid, that ſuch numbers came from Ireland to live on his bounty, that he was obliged, for obvious reaſons, to make a law, that no ſtranger ſhould continue on a viſit longer than a year and a day, unleſs he could give a ſufficient reaſon for it. During that ſpace of time, any perſon had a right to demand entertainment, without even giving an account of himſelf; but, at the expiration of it, he behoved either to diſcover himſelf, or depart.—The M'Kenzies are ſaid to be deſcended from this chief.

got by the voice of mid-night tale *. The ſound of their fame ſhall mingle with the clouds that roll behind thee. Their tombs ſhall rear their gray heads, and wage a conteſt with the blaſts of other winters. The hunter will view the chace from their tops. The ſtag will ſhun the ſtorm near them. The ſtranger will view them and ſigh. The fame of the valiant ſhall travel to other lands.

But the little ſoul ſhall vaniſh, like the fleeting cloud, that wanders among the twinkling

* The mid-night tales here alluded to, are thoſe rehearſed at late-wakes to entertain the people who ſit up with the corpſe. The deſire of hearing thoſe poems, draws together the inhabitants, from a great way round, who are ſo much captivated with the compoſitions, that they behold, with reluctance, the approach of morning. This cuſtom owes its origin to the bards, who were wont, on ſuch occaſions, to relate the actions of the deceaſed. Hence, it became cuſtomary, on the death of ſuch perſons as were not entitled to eulogiums, to ſing the deeds of antient heroes; and, as the audience naturally retained what had made ſuch a deep impreſſion on the mind, it has fortunately proved the great means of preſerving ſome of the ſublimeſt poems in the Galic language from the womb of oblivion.

ling ſtars. It ſhakes its miſty garment on the mountains The courſe of a blaſt is towards it. Frightened at the fury of the wind, it diſappears, and its dim form is no more remembered. The fair-haired morning ſhall rejoice in the eaſt, and ſhall not meet it: The ſun ſhall ſmile in the face of heaven, and ſhall not behold it.

Lately we looked, and, behold! the chief of Shirar ſtrode in his might. The armour of his battles was near him. His ſtrength was the ſhield of the feeble; his hall was the home of ſtrangers †. The ſons of other lands taſted

† If the reader is inclined to compare an antient to ſome modern chiefs, he may peruſe the following lines tranſlated from Dugal Bawn, compoſed about the time of the late emigration to America.

The pale-fac'd tenant of your cottage hears,
With heart-felt grief, the tales of other years.
What tho' his noble ſire, with ſword and ſhield,
Procur'd him freedom in the bloody field;
What tho' the father's arm the battle won?
No comfort reaches to the wretched ſon.
His much-lov'd wife and infants, pale thro' want,
Demand that ſuccour which he cannot grant.
The youthful group around the mother hings,
And craves relief from hunger's piercing ſtings.

The

taſted his friendſhip: His fame traveled over many ſeas.—But this day's ſun bears witneſs to a change, and has ſeen his fall, like the mighty oak, which had long ſhaken its buſhy head above the foreſt. The ax of the hewer came in the day of its ſtrength, and laid its ſpreading branches on the ground. Fly now unreſtrained, noiſy blaſt! No tall trunk rears its ſtately head to oppoſe thy rapid journey. Death came like a dark cloud from the north, that hides the ſun behind its ſable wings. The hills around are ſad: The vallies mourn beneath

The mournful fair, with anguiſh, hears their cries,
The big tear guſhing from her ſtreaming eyes.
The trembling ſons of woe perform in haſte
Their rapid journey down her ſwan-like breaſt.
Her laſt-born ſuckling ſips the briny flood,
And drinks grief's offspring with the milky food.
Sighs fought with words, and ſtopt their paſſage long,
While half-form'd accents periſh'd on her tongue.
But fault'ring words at laſt made good their way.
O tho', &c.

The ſubject here becomes religious, which, in Galic poetry, is ſeldom worthy of imitation, as they received their ſyſtem of it from a claſs of men who are no ways famed for liberal ſentiments.

beneath its frowns. The liquid plains ceaſe to glitter. The red deer couches below the elbow of the rock. Silence is in the wood. The feathered people ſhun the drop beneath the ſpreading leaves. The hound ſhakes his ears, and fills the footſteps of the home-bound hunter.

Many were the ſtreaming eyes that viewed thy entrance into the narrow houſe, thou chief of battles!—Weep, ye maids of woody Fuarven! Mourn, ye youths of the hill of hinds! The chief of the people is low.

Who ſhall lead us in the day of ſtrife? Where is the ſhield of our ſafety, when the foe appears?—The head of the glens is low: Feeble are the people without a leader.

Who is ſhe that wanders with diſtracted ſteps on the mountains? What dark eye gives the tear of woe to the wind? What hand of ſnow ſtrews the long diſhevelled hair on the boſom of the breeze? What white boſom heaves to the blaſt in ſorrow, and calls in vain to her hunter?—Who, but the daughter of generous Garven, could diſplay ſuch charms?

charms? Who, but the ſpouſe of Duchoil, could pour forth ſuch ſighs?

Range in ſafety thro' his woods, ye dark-brown deer. The hounds of the chief are howling in his hall. Often they follow the tearful ſpouſe of their maſter's love. And often ſhall you follow her in vain, ye faithful ſons of ſwiftneſs! who were wont to outſtrip the wind:—Never more ſhall Duchoil lead you to the chace!

The ſtranger from a-far ſhall come to the hall of the open door. He will aſk for the chief of the ſtretched-forth hand; but the ſhaking head will anſwer with a ſilent tear. Then will he hear of thy fall, O chief of Shirar! and his ſigh will come forth. He will mourn at thy tomb; but thou wilt not hear him †.— Alas! Son of the diſtant land,

U thy

† Moſt of theſe poems, eſpecially thoſe in the Elegiac ſtrain, were generally rehearſed extempory. On that account they are frequently defective in point of connection, leaving the reader often abruptly, as in the preſent caſe. The idea of the ſtrangers, who had formerly been entertained by the hoſpitable chief, mourning at his tomb, appeared ſo ſtrong to the bard, that he concluded a deſcription

thy words are piercing. Other clans dwell in safety under their chiefs; but the arm of our strength is low.

SUL-

scription of it to be beyond his reach. He therefore leaves his audience to form to themselves this affecting scene. To a superficial reader, therefore, the most valuable passages must be lost, as they require a strenuous exertion of attention to which few will perhaps think them entitled.

No species of composition leaves greater room for the imagination to work upon, than the Celtic poetry. The bards were a class of men who became venerable from their gray hairs, as well as respectable from their profession. Destitute of every aid which literature furnishes for the improvement of the mind, they were under the necessity of gathering their knowledge from experience. Although this be the most infallible, it is by no means the most expeditious method of acquiring it; and a life must be far spent before much acquisition can be made. For this reason, the bards always appear old men. Thus, adorned with locks worn gray in the service of their country, and surrounded by some of those who had been witnesses to the atchievements of their youth, they delivered their sentiments, with that dignity of stile, and freedom of expression, which a mind conscious of its own superiority naturally claims; and mankind received whatever they advanced, without presuming to exercise the talents of criticism.

SULVINA's ELEGY.

COME forth, ſigh of woe. Roll down, tears of grief. Mourn the fall of the lovely. Bathe the memory of the white-armed daughter of Morauld.

Why doth the wandering ſtream ſmile as it paſſeth? Why doth the finny tribe ſport in the cryſtal flood? Roll in darkneſs, ye glittering waves! Retire to the blackeſt pool, ye ſilver-winged!

Sound no horn on my hills, ye followers of the ſtag! Spare the hide of the roe, ye bearers of the bow!

Nod your green heads in grief, ye leafy daughters of the foreſt! Sing a tale of woe, ye tenants of the buſh!

Why doſt thou travel in thy mildneſs, ſoft breath of ſummer? The faireſt flower that ever met thee is low. The friendſhip of the breeze ſhall no more ſmile on the cheek of the roſe. The waving ringlets of her dark-brown hair

hair ſhall no more tremble on the wings of the paſſing blaſt.

Away with thy voice of mirth, joyful morning! She, who was wont to ſhine before thy early beams, ſhall not awake. Hang your drooping heads, ye flowers of the mead! A ſurly blaſt has plucked the faireſt lily from her ſtalk. Lonely is her dwelling in the gloomy tomb. The ſun-beams of coming years ſhall not ſmile on her virgin-charms.

But come, O come, with all thy ſable clouds, black-robed night! Graſp the hills in thy dark boſom. Let the ſhrieks of ghoſts, the ſcreams of owls, and the courſe of meteors, be around me. Let the ſtrength of the angry blaſt bear me on its wings; and let the ſpirits of the wind hum their tales of woe in my ear.

Come forth from thy narrow dwelling in the land of graves, thou beam that was lovely. Why didſt thou retire in the midſt of thy blooming years, like the midnight ſtar, that ruſhes behind a dark cloud? The mariners home is near its bed in the weſtern waves. His eager eyes ſearch for it in vain among the boiſterous

boiſterous billows, and bluſtering blaſts of ſtormy night; but he finds it not.

Why doſt thou pour the beams of thy kindneſs around me, bright queen of night? The friendſhip of thy ſmiles brings no joy to me. More welcome are the frowns of grizzly ghoſts, the tremendous voice of burſting clouds, or the ſurly aſpect of the wrathful ſtorm! Away with thy glaring light, inſulting moon! Hide thyſelf among the dark folds of nightly clouds. Never ſhall your ſmiles call forth Sulvina from the hall: Never ſhall your ſilent beams dance round her graceful ſhadow. The form of her who was lovely ſhall no more wander along the ruſtling heath.

The meeting of warriors is in the hall of Morauld; but the voice of mirth is not there. No white fingers are ſeen among the trembling ſtrings. Mute is the harp. Loud are the ſighs. What eye can refuſe a tear to the lovely!

A cloud has darkened the valley at noon. The ſun-beam of my joy is ſet, no more to return. My eyes ſhall never more behold its coming

coming forth from the back of the eaſtern hill.

Then, come, raven-haired night! with all thy black clouds. Spread thy drouſy wings over the inhabitants of the foreſt; and let the tenants of the cottage purſue their bliſsful dreams among the viſionary mountains that riſe near the couch of their ſlumbers:—But talk not of ſleep to me, gloomy night; My breaſt is the houſe of woe. Tho' thou ruleſt in darkneſs over the children of nature, I regard thee not. Wilt thou thyſelf reſt, when the all-lightening ſun ſhakes his white locks in the eaſt: Wilt thou preſume to combat the coming forth of his beauty?—No: Thou flieſt in haſte with thy gathered clouds; and the wretched only mourn thy departure.

Where is the courſe of thy journey, black cloud? Ruſh in haſte from thy dwelling in the ſky. Bring thy hundred ghoſts among the dark folds of thy miſty garments. Let the bending oaks and the falling rocks proclaim thy approach. Bear me on the wings of thy ſtrength: Bear me over boiſterous ſeas,

to

to diſtant iſles, where the ſouls of the lovely rejoice before the ſun-beams of eternal day.

Do thou, Sulvina, meet me with the ſweeteſt of thy ſmiles. Stretch forth thy white hand from the ſoft robes of thy miſty cloud. Look on me in kindneſs; and, let the mildeſt beams of thy ſparkling eyes fly round me like the breath of ſummer. Be the pillar of my wandering ſteps to the iſle of peace.—Let me taſte thy friendſhip in a land unknown.

ORAN.

ORAN-MOLLA*.

NO joy is mine in the abſence of the maid of love. The white boſoms of a hundred virgins meet the ſun-beams on the banks of Cormic: But thy equal, matchleſs maid of the rolling eye! is not there. Thy ſmiles are

* Oran-Molla, *a ſong of praiſe*—It was to this poem that the muſic was firſt compoſed, which, in the end of the laſt century, became well known in the low countries by the name of Killicranky. Some other pieces in this collection are ſet to muſic, which the Lowlanders conſider as originally their own, and which the partiality of ſome, and the ignorance of others, have aſcribed to the invention of an Italian. This makes it more than probable, that moſt of the Scots tunes have been compoſed by the Celtic bards, and entirely overthrows that ridiculous opinion, which has lately prevailed, that the beſt of them were done by the unfortunate

are as the glances of the fire of brightneſs, when he rides in meridian ſplendor over the mountains. Thy words as the voice of many harps, when the ſongs of bards are heard, and their fingers travel among the trembling ſtrings.

Thou art diſtant far, maid of Cormic! But dark mountains raiſe their cliffy heads between us in vain. Mine eyes ſhall never ceaſe to view the image of the lovely. My thoughts ſhall wander round the crouding beauties that attend thee.

The eager eyes of a hundred warriors are towards the captivating charms, which adorn the ſwelling ſurface of thy riſing boſom †.

nate Rizzio, ſo late as the time of Queen Mary; who, if he did any thing, can only be allowed the merit of making a few variations, and adding ſecond parts, which the ſets that are known in the Highlands generally want. There are, however, about a dozen of the beſt ſlow tunes that have no antient poem ſet to them in the Galic language. If ever there were any, as moſt probably there has, the overwhelming waves of time have buried them in oblivion.

† The Galic reader will here perceive a want. The tranſlator has deſignedly left out the warm deſcription which

The faireſt lily that ſhines in the foreſt, contends not with the ſweetneſs of its ſmiles; and, when it meets the ſun-beams at noon, the ſwan is aſhamed of her downy breaſt, and hides it beneath the riſing wave.

Thy

which the bard has given of 'the two white hills raiſing 'their ſoft heads on the boſom of the virgin, like two bright 'ſun-beams, when, ſmiling, they ſteal thro' the miſt of 'Ardven, to bleſs the bewildered traveller.' Tho' every ſentence in the original is perfectly conſiſtent with the moſt rigid rules of delicacy; yet, as the bard has deſcribed his miſtreſs's boſom a few inches lower than the ladies are pleaſed to expoſe theirs at preſent, the tranſlator ſhall not preſume to lead the readers imagination where the delicate fair will not indulge his ſight.

A bard, in the laſt century, mentions the cauſe of covering the boſom as a female impoſition. I ſhall tranſlate the paſſage, not as a fact, but merely to ſhow what injuries the fair-ſex have ſuffered in all ages, from the capricious humours, and ſuſpicious diſpoſitions of the males.

The virtuous mothers of our ſires deceiv'd
No youthful hero with a cover'd breaſt.
When virgin-purity corrupted fled,
The ſlacken'd breaſts confeſs'd the ſecret ſin.
But their fair daughters, by the aid of art,
Affecting ſhame unknown to innocence,
Pretend to hide, in veil of gaudy lawn,
A boſom ſpotleſs for the nuptial bed.

Imagination

Thy delicate fingers trace not in vain the folds of the lawn. Thy needle gives birth to the ſpreading tree, that ſeems to bend beneath the load of mellow fruit *.—But ſtretch, lovely maid! ſtretch forth thy hand in kindneſs to me, and I ſhall breathe, in reality, that life which the ſons of thy needle but ſeem to enjoy. Let the friendſhip of thy eyes ſhine around me, and I will flouriſh before their

Imagination wanders in the dark,
And magnifies with greed the hidden ſtore,
Which ſeeming modeſty hoards up with care.—
Deluded lovers! ſighing for a breaſt,
Which conſcious guilt conceals from public view!

* The ladies were the only artiſts in this way, among the Caledonians, as well as the Greeks, and other antient nations. Inſtances of this, among the latter, muſt be obvious to every learned reader, not to mention any of our more recent anceſtors.

And aprons ſet wi' mony a dyce
Of neidil-wark ſe rair,
Wove be ne hand, as ze may gueſs,
Saif that of Fairly fair.

But the *Bratach*, or ſtandard, was the uſual field in which the efforts of female genius were diſplayed; and there have been inſtances, in the knight-errant ſtrain, of warriors falling in love with ladies, whom they had never ſeen, from the beautiful execution of theſe ſtandards.

their beams, like the vegetable tribes that rear their tender heads beneath the kindly breath of ſummer.

Who ſhall convey to ſong the form of the maid who moves, matchleſs, over the mountains? Her ſmooth neck is the white bed of her golden treſſes. Her flowing ringlets fall in ſweet diſorder over her ivory ſhoulders *. Soft blue eyes roll beneath a ſmall round arch. Warriors melt before the ſtrength of their beams!

Move on in thy majeſtic ſteps, maid of the mild-rolling eye! The blooming heath ſhall meet

* The whole of this poem has ſunk to an unaccountable degree of poverty in the preſent tranſlation, and this paſſage in a particular manner. The words *Bachlach, dualach, caibbui, &c.* which aſtoniſh the Galic reader with their energy and poetical beauties, are altogether loſt, as the Engliſh contains no term capable of expreſſing either of them. It muſt be acknowledged, that this language may expreſs any ſentiment that ariſes in the mind; but the beauties of a poem do not often depend ſo much on the ſentiment, as the manner of expreſſing it. Nothing, therefore, but the ſentiment can be preſerved in the tranſlation, as the genius of the two languages is ſo different, and as the Galic contains ſome thouſands of words not to be found in the Engliſh.

meet thy graceful ſhadow in gladneſs: The verdant plains ſhall wave their graſsy locks, and ſmile as it paſſeth. Grace is in thy preſence. Thy breath is as the ſcent of a flowery garden, when it pours its ſweet odours on the wings of the breeze.

The tongue of thy ſongs is ſurrounded by the white formers of the ivory ring *. The ſound of

* What is here tranſlated, *white formers of the ivory ring*, ſtands in the original *Dead, Gealdh*; a term to which no word in the Engliſh language bears the ſmalleſt affinity. When ſuch terms occur, the tranſlation muſt undoubtedly loſe all the beauties of the original.

Dead ſignifies a graceful aſſemblage of refined objects, whoſe perfections aſtoniſh the beholders, and excite the moſt agreeable ſenſations; a term applied by the Celtic bards to the fine ſet teeth of the ladies.

A few remarks on this paſſage will contribute to ſupport the truth of an aſſertion, which the tranſlator has formerly preſumed to advance; That the Galic, even in its preſent uncultivated ſtate, diſplays a luxuriant richneſs of poetical terms, incomparably ſuperior to any of the modern languages.

The care which the ladies of our days take to have the avenue leading to their gentle ſtomachs adorned with a proper ſet of ivory centinels, leaves no room to doubt, but theſe

of thy voice is like the muſic of the wood, when the feathery tribes rejoice among the ruſtling leaves.

O thou

theſe champions do great execution in the day of battle. A troop, which has ſo often diſtinguiſhed itſelf in the cauſe of the fair, ought then by no means to be forgot, when the triumphs of their victories are rehearſing; yet poetry, which pretends to do juſtice to every member and minute feature of the victorious beauty, has, with unpardonable negligence, ſuffered the teeth to ſleep without their fame, while the actions of the eyes, lips, chin, &c. are magnified by repeated eulogiums.

From this general cenſure, however, impartiality will compel every intelligent reader to except the Celtic bards. In their moſt antient poems, we meet with the moſt beautiful poetical terms, that the nervous exertion of rhetoric could invent, to expreſs the ſymmetry, whiteneſs, &c of the ladies teeth. But it muſt be owned, that the Engliſh language will not admit of any poetical ſallies on this ſubject, till ſome new terms be received. The word *teeth* is harſh, and may be uſed with ſucceſs to deſcribe any diſguſtful object, as a witch, a tyger, &c. but can never be admitted with any grace in the delineation of beauty.

Did the Galic furniſh no other name for teeth than *ſiachel*, the bards would have laboured under the ſame diſadvantage. But as *theſe* that grimly grin in the face of an old hagg, and *theſe* that ſweetly ſmile behind the vermillion

O thou who formeſt thoſe excellencies which captivate the enraptured eyes of men! this is the work of thy hand; and we feel the ſtrength of its power *. What, then, muſt be thy own perfections, ſince the object that ſtarts into exiſtence at thy nod, is thus beautifully formed!

Hide not thy fair head in the heathy mountains, bright ſon of heaven! Lonely is my ſeat on the hill of roes. The maid of the yellow locks is diſtant far: The hall of her fathers riſes on the banks of Cormic, and many gloomy hills intervene.—But thou heareſt me not, bright-haired traveller of the ſky! Thy own courſe has been over many hills to the bed of thy reſt; and why have not I reached the dwelling of the maid?—But reach it I will, O ſun! though not with a ſpeed like thine.

Why do ye fly, ye deers, with all your ſwiftneſs over the heath? No hoſtile ſteps are mine.

No

million lips of a youthful beauty, are certainly not ſimilar objects; why ſhould the bards, who were endued with the power of inventing, and the liberty of applying terms, give them the ſame appellation?—

* The bard appears by this exclamation to have been acquainted with the true religion.

No parent of death glitters in my hand.—My ſpeed is towards the white arms of beauty. They are ſeen, like two ſun-beams, in the hall of the chief of Cormic.

Raiſe, daughter of night! raiſe thy fair head in the eaſt: Be the guide of my lonely journey over the duſky mountains.

Fall ſoftly, thou noiſy ſtream! Steal down thy rocks in ſilence. The ſhaggy tenants of the foreſt are aſleep; Awake them not. The hunter ſits far diſtant from his home. The gleam of half-extinguiſhed oaks is before him: Two faithful dogs are his ſhield behind. He ſlumbers by times on the heath; then wakes, and waits with impatience the firſt ſmiles of the morning.

When ſhall the hall of Cormic rear its lofty head before me?—Travel ſoftly on your airy wings, ye winds that approach it! The white armed daughter of beauty is in the midſt of her ſlumbers. Blow kindly, O breath of night! on the chambers of her reſt; this is the ſeaſon of her dreams.—Perhaps my image is ſeen among the children of her ſleep.—Son of fancy, ſpeak ſoftly to the maid. Tell her my ſighs

are

are loud on the mountains: My groans are frequent on the hill of winds. My hounds look mournfully in my face, and wonder at the cauſe. They howl at my feet, and turn their wiſhful eyes by times to the hill of deers.—But ye look in vain, ye purſuers of the wind! the chace has no charms for me. The maid of the breaſt of ſnow is diſtant far, and no joy meets me on the mountains.

Though lonely, I wander by the ſtream, though mournful, my ſigh mingles with the wind of the deſart; the ſavour of thy bright eyes, fair maid, would cheer me, as the ſun the hills, when he pours forth the ſtrength of his beauty at noon, and ſhakes the ſnow from their heathy locks.

THE

WORDS OF WOE*.

VOICE of the tale, move thou at the nod of grief, and let the words of woe be heard in the breath of the ſong.

Many have been the former ſtings which have pierced my wounded breaſt. Theſe have increaſed the paleneſs of my drooping face, and thinned the ringlets of my falling hair. But other hardſhips appear now as nothing, and former miſeries vaniſh before the preſent blow.——

Mournful are the feelings of my wounded breaſt. Son of the ſtranger! thy tear would fall,

* This poem is the compoſition of a lady on the death of her huſband, and has been much admired in the original. Some of the beſt pieces in the Galic, both in the paſtoral and elegiac ſtrain, have been the productions of the fair-ſex.

fall, couldſt thou behold them. The mighty have fallen by the arm of death: The ſword of affliction has pierced my heart. My tears bathe not the memory of the feeble. Grace and greatneſs were in the ſteps of him whoſe fall I mourn. He who was high among ſurrounding chiefs, is now the humble tenant of the peaceful grave. In vain I ſearch for my hunter among his rocks and his woods: In vain I raiſe my voice among the hills of his chace. Echo anſwers; but he is ſilent. His dogs alſo purſue his former footſteps; but they return without him. Early in the morning they viſit the chambers of his ſleep; but he is not there.—I cannot eaſe your grief, faithful ſons of ſwiftneſs! but I will join your mourning. My tears will be ſeen: Your moans will be heard. The ſtranger as he paſſeth will aſk the cauſe. The tongue of information will anſwer, 'Becauſe the mighty are low:'—Becauſe the chief of Aſcar is lonely in the gloomy tomb. His wife and hounds mourn his fall. All day they ſhun the light: The windows of the hall are ſhut. No open door is there to receive the traveller as he paſſeth; otherwiſe

the

the hand of invitation and the ſhell of friendſhip * had been held forth to thee, and thou hadſt departed no ſtranger to the joys of the feaſt.—No wonder that the voice of woe is heard; for the chief that is low was mighty. He was fierce in the battle: He was ſwift in the chace: He was mild at the feaſt.'

Stop—ſon of the feeble voice! Who art thou that attempts to ſpeak the deeds of the chief?

* The moderns are divided in their conjectures concerning the materials from which the antient Caledonians extracted the liquors which they drank out of the ſhells ſo often mentioned in their poetry. This liquor does not appear to have been ſtrong; for we never hear of any perſon being intoxicate by it. According to the beſt accounts, there were three kinds of it. The ſimpleſt and moſt ordinary drink was extracted from a delicate kind of heath, known at preſent by the name of *French heath*; the next in quality from *juniper berries*, and their wine from the *birch*. The two laſt are uſed at preſent; but it is ſaid there was a ſecret method of extracting ale from the heath, which is now altogether loſt. The loſs of this ſuppoſed ſecret, however, ſeems to have been occaſioned by no other cauſe than the invention of malt liquor; and our moderate anceſtors might have been perfectly happy with an entertainment, which our more refined palates would by no means reliſh.

chief? Have not I heard the ſecret feelings of his breaſt, when the words of the valiant came from his mouth?—Yet I am ſilent. Didſt thou know the hero better than I; or is thy tongue the parent of more piercing words? Thine eyes have never ſhed the tears of anguiſh:—Thy ſigh has never iſſued from a wounded heart.

Viſage of danger! diſplay not thy threatening brows on our mountains: He who was firſt to meet thee is low. The ſword of the valiant is here; but where is the arm of ſtrength?—Son of the little ſoul unſheath it not. Let not the ſword of the mighty meet diſgrace in the hands of the feeble; leſt the warrior of the diſtant land ſhould carry it to the hall of his fathers, and ſay to the maid of his love, 'Feel the griſt of the handle, and the length of the blade.—Strong was the arm of him who graſped the parent of death; but he ſank before me.'—Maid of the diſtant land believe it not.——

O land of ghoſts! reſidence of every friend of mine! is there no room in your nightly chambers for me?—O chief of Aſcar! thy hall

hall has often given reſt to the weary; and will thy narrow dwelling refuſe to admit the wife of thy youth?—ſhe who was wont to rejoice when the departing ſun ſaluted the weſtern hill; becauſe her hunter returned at night. He returned in the ſtrength of his beauty. His panting hounds came before; his loaded followers behind. She who waited thy coming at Crayemore, whoſe breaſt glowed at thy approach, calls:—Wilt thou not hear.—Speak, ye tenants of the grave! Your cries will be ſweet unto me. The huſband of my youth, the father of my children, is amongſt you; he will protect me.—But no children are mine. They alſo walk before the moon without a ſhadow *.—Why ſo mercileſs to me, O grave! Thou haſt wained from me the affections of thoſe whom my breaſt has ſuckled; and wilt thou not permit them to anſwer me in kindneſs?

Chief

* The antients were perfectly convinced, that, although the ghoſts of deceaſed perſons wandered abroad, their bodies ſtill remained in the grave. With very good reaſon, therefore, they concluded, that, where there was no ſubſtance, there could be no ſhadow.

Chief of Aſcar!—thou who waſt great among the mighty, wilt thou not hear?—Other ghoſts roam abroad in the ſeaſon of darkneſs: The ſons of the feeble fly in haſte; but I fly not thee. Thy grim ghoſt has no terrors for me. I ſearch for thee among the dim ſhades of night; but I cannot find thee. The whirlwind is heard as it paſſeth; but thy voice is not there. The full orbed moon is in the eaſt: The poliſhed ſurface of the lake glitters below. Smooth are her ſteps along the half-darkened arch.—But thou ſmileſt in vain, daughter of night! The children of the den ſleep, regardleſs of thy beams. The ſons of the cottage alſo purſue their peaceful dreams! No ſhadow moves before thee, but the wretched Leſbana. She mourns the fall of her huſband. Her voice is heard among the clouds of night; but he hears her not. She inquires for her hunter; but the ſons of the rock return her own words for anſwer.—

O thou moon! to whom the trembling ſtars nod in obedience in the ſeaſon of ſleep; thou haſt often travelled thy journey through the ſky.

ſky. The wretched have often mourned before thee; and thou haſt poured forth thy light on the mountains to comfort them. Thou permitteſt the inhabitants of the tomb to come forth, and leave their ſhadows behind. Thou ſhutteſt the eyes of the children of day in ſleep, and the hills are left free to the tenants of the grave. Why then are they not abroad?—Is my tear not big? do they not ſee it? Is my ſigh not loud? do they not hear it?—Why then do they not anſwer to the voice of my grief?

Spouſe of my youth! ſhall I taſte the ſweets of ſleep, while the rude breath of night daſhes againſt thy tomb in the land of graves?—No, ſurly blaſt! thou ſhalt not tell in other lands, that thou ruſhed over the tomb of the mighty, and that no ſoft locks roſe on thy wings as thou paſſed. The dwelling of the hero, though narrow, ſhall not be unmarked. The ſons of the ſtranger will view the ſtone of his fame in the ſeaſon of the ſun. When the courſe of the moon is abroad, Leſbana will mourn at his tomb. No cloud ſhall roll without a ſigh: No

No blaſt ſhall paſs without a portion of her falling hair. The virgins will ſeize it, and cry, 'Whence is thy journey of woe, ſoft-waving lock!'

Pleaſant art thou to Leſbana, as thou wandereſt from cloud to cloud, broad-faced ruler of the night! Sweet is thy aſpect as thou lookeſt forth in all the mildneſs of thy beauty, when the ſmile of joy is on both thy cheeks. The twinkling ſtars diminiſh in thy preſence, and ſhrink by times behind the covert of their miſty clouds.

But raiſe not the voice of thy mirth in the eaſt, fair-haired morning! Shake not the ringlets of thy beauty before me. Go to her who has loſt no lover, who comes forth from the hall when night ſpreads her duſky wing over the mountains. Her ſeat is beneath the ruſtling of an oak. Her variegated garment flutters in the blaſt: She gathers her ſcattered locks from the wind. Earneſt is the rolling of two blue ſtars below her ſoft brows. Her white arm is the pillar of her leaning cheek. She looks with expectation's eye to the hill of the chace.

Often may the return of thy hunter bleſs thy ſoft eyes, daughter of joy! But never ſhall a beam of mirth ſmile on the cheek of Leſbana. Her locks ſhall travel on many winds. A blaſt ſhall ſoon mix her with the duſt. A ſtranger will raiſe the tomb of her who had no ſon, whoſe hunter ſank by the arm of death.—Every virgin that paſſeth will give a ſtone *. Often will the cry be heard, 'Peace 'round the tomb of the mournful!'

THE

* It is a cuſtom at this day among the Highlanders, as they paſs, to throw a ſtone into a *cairn*, which is always made at the place where any particular misfortune or death has happened. By this means, theſe monuments, inſtead of diminiſhing, always increaſe; and ſeveral very large ones are to be ſeen in different parts of Scotland.

THE

APPROACH of SUMMER †

MY wandering fancy returned from the purſuit of viſions, as the enlightened vale proclaimed the approach of the ſun. I ſtarted from the inactive couch of repoſe. The cryſtal dew trembled upon the boſom of the yielding graſs along the reclining ſurface of the pregnant plain. The ſweet voice of the pipe ſaluted my ear, and the aged rocks returned their approbation of the harmonious notes.

The

† This poem was compoſed by a gentleman of univerſal knowledge, about forty years ago He attempted, in other compoſitions, to introduce the beauties of the Greek and Roman poets into the Galic language. But, as he entered too warmly into the political controverſy of his time, his works, in general, muſt be excluded from a tranſlation. The reader, from this ſpecimen, however will readily perceive the ſuperiority of native genius, unaſſiſted by any other qualification, over the ſelf-ſufficient knowledge of literature, and the little embelliſhments of art.

The birch ſent forth infant branches thro' the opening jaws of the diſjointed rock. The blue miſt of the morning leaned on the buſhes which adorned the brow of the hill; but it fled the approach of the aſcending ſun, whoſe friendly beams ſmiled upon the half formed daughter of the feeble twig.

Sweet is the beauty which adorns thy ſpreading leaves, ſmiling primroſe of the grateful hue! Thou art the moſt courageous warrior of the vegetable race. While other flowers are buried in the boſom of the earth, faint-hearted ſons of the tender roots, thy ſteps are forward to combat the breath of the ſtill ſubſiſting cold. Clothed in the armour of thy beauty, thou art the earlieſt jewel that adorns the brow of the infant ſpring.

The ſpreading roots of trees extend their paſture through the hidden bowels of the earth, in ſearch of enriching draughts to increaſe the ſtrength of the ſtately plant. With impartial juſtice, the trunk deſtributes the aſcending juice through each twiſting vein. Her grateful offſpring ſpread the leafy garments round the parent of their wealth; and

and the thruſh, enfolded in their ſkirts, pours forth the harmonious ſong in the boſom of the morning. Every member of the vocal concert flies to the collecting branches of the wood. Their little breaſts are flushed with joy at the approaching light. A hundred voices from the thickeſt thorn, proclaim the welcome of the infant day. The voice of the little wren is mingled in the general ſound; and the red-breaſted ſongſter is heard on the outmoſt verge of the projecting branch.

O glorious fountain of light! bright daughter of the eaſt, welcome is thy northward journey to the wiſhing eyes of nature and her ſons. The hills, robbed by the ſurly breath of winter of the garments with which thou lately clothed them, ſpread forth their ſhivering boſoms before thee with ſeeming complaints, and ſolicit thy chearing aid to heal the wounds of the froſty blaſt.—They petition not in vain. The darting arrows of thy beams defeat the efforts of the retiring cold.

The collecting veins of the rill ſwell with the rapid deſcent of the melting ſnow. And, by thy majeſtic preſence, every gloom which frowned

frowned on the ſurface of the earth, trembling, diſappears. Fly, congealing foe of increaſe; the united ſons of nature ſhall aſſemble to rejoice in your abſence; the little daiſies, eager to partake of the ſmiles of ſummer, ſtart from behind their green curtain, and preſent themſelves clad in golden charms of infant purity. Early herbs are clothed in the livery of the ſpring; and the roving bee, bewildered in choice, taſtes the riches of every flower, and joyfully hums amidſt ſurrounding wealth.

The admiring eyes of the traveller are loſt among the crouding beauties of the variegated plains; and his ears are raviſhed with the voice of harmony and love. The joys of nature ſtill increaſe; for now the aſcending ſun, with uniform pace, has gained the ſummit of the azure arch, and drives the ſhadow of the high-erected hills from the enlightened bottom of the hollow glens. The feathered tenant of the buſh, with joy beholds the welcome change, and pours the melodious offſpring of his warbling throat on the boſom of expanded light. No cloud of ſurly aſpect travels on the top of the mountains, to intercept

cept the favours of the bountiful ſun, or ſilence the muſic of the choral bands.

The words of paternal love are in the breath of the herds, as they diſperſe in ſearch of the flowery paſture. The green-covered plains round the thickeſt grove, ſmile under their increaſing wealth, and invite the ſtraggling flocks to taſte the richneſs of their luxuriant crop.

Sweet are the words of thy muſic, and beautiful the varying garment of thy pride, lovely warbler of the quick-moving eye! Thy ſeat is on the lofticſt branch of the towering oak of many years, whoſe ſtrong-jointed trunk has long withſtood the breath of the bluſtering blaſt. Her dwelling is not on the top of the barren hill: She collects the riches of her ſtrength by the ſide of the fertile ſtream, on the brow of the verdant vale.

The animating breath of the ſun calls forth a thouſand herbs from the prolific womb of the pregnant plain; opening flowers are ſurrounded by leaves projecting from the bending ſtalk; and every ſpecies of the vegetable tribe ſhines in its gayeſt garments along the joyful glen. Sweet is the ſcent of the flowery

flowery plain which ſurrounds the bottom of the erected rock; the ſpreading roſes ſhake their leaves upon the waving ſtalk before the friendly breeze; with joy they taſte the welcome embrace. But their nod is on the top of a more extended ſtalk, whoſe moiſty dwelling is on the fertile boſom of the fruitful mead.

The gentle lily, ſoft emblem of virgin purity, with unaffected grace, adorns the hollow of the mountains that gradually form the curve along the twiſting verge of the deſcending rill. Her decent robes are not the work of oſtentatious gaudy fingers; her modeſt looks are from the pale garments of the white leaf, near the ſhade of the riſing buſh, where the morning often finds the roe, ere he ſtarts from his couch of reſt.

Now the herds repair to the well-known fold, to have their udders eaſed of the milky load. Their voice is joined with the ſhepherd's pipe to quicken the ſteps of the dairy nymphs: Welcome are their preſence to the expecting flocks, who liſten attentive to the quivering ſong.

Darting through the yielding ſtream, the ſtately ſalmon cleaves with eaſe a paſſage. His

ſpeed

ſpeed is from the ſtrength of his finny wings, as he purſues the courſe of the unwary fly, whoſe ſhortened life periſhes within his opening jaws. The ſon of the flood ſprings with joy along the liquid plains; the variegated ſcales of his ſparkling ſide and ſilver wings, wantonly ſport along the cryſtal ſtream.

Fluſhed with the joys of conjugal love, the wood-cock, from the ſpreading tree, takes his airy flight to the leſs maſculine cover of the heathy plain; with watchful looks he rears his waving creſt above the ſlender branches of the heath; his ſteps are in ſearch of the coy charmer of his breaſt, whoſe half-inviting diſtant notes he eagerly purſues with joyful flight; with majeſtic grace he ſhakes the varying colour of his ſwelling pride, and ſolicits the friendly glances of the female eye, while the ſpreading wing invites her to the warm embrace. Fly not the arms of thy lover, daughter of the heath; this is the nuptial ſeaſon of the feathered tribe: Every tender pair taſte the pleaſures of love in the heathy locks of the ſurrounding hills. The joys of nature, without interruption, be thy portion, ſprightly daughter of the

nimble eye! thy grateful lover will remain faithful to the charmer of his breaſt; he will yet provide thee food, and cheer thy heart with melodious notes from the diſtant tree, when thou ſpreadeſt thy motherly wings o'er the tenants of the neſt; and, with the animating kindneſs of thy ſpeckled boſom, warm into exiſtence a feeble crew, the feathered ſons of the ſhell.

Thus, fed by the liberal hand of nature, paſs ye the day, ſweet tuned warblers, until the dark cloud of night from the eaſt prepares to ſupplant the departing light. Then let the children of the wood ſtrain every muſcle, and pour forth the choice offſpring of their throats, to ſolicit the ſpeedy return of departing light.

The theme ceaſed; let ſilence enſue; and, let the little buſhes open their hoſpitable gates to receive their nightly gueſts.

THE

THE

ANTIENT CHIEF*.

HAPPY the bard who ſung in former days,
When Albin heard with joy her heroes praiſe;
When her ſons ruſh'd with courage to the fields,
Where echoing rocks proclaim'd the noiſe of ſhields.
Her warrior, when the ſheath receiv'd his ſword,
Taſted each bleſſing which its edge ſecur'd.
His chief was ruler only to defend
The weak from inſults, and make tyrants bend;

To

* This poem, a tranſlation of which appeared ſome time ago in a periodical publication, was compoſed by CALLUM ROADH, a bard ſtill alive in the Highlands, in the time of the late emigration to America. It is here inſerted, not ſo much on account of its merit, as to ſhow the preſent taſte of the Highland poetry, and to repreſent the hardſhips which many of the inhabitants of that country ſuffer from the tyrannical *viceroys* of ſome chiefs.

To cheer the aged and inſtruct the young,
To hear each conteſt and redreſs each wrong.
At his tribunal open were the laws,
No ſubſtitute was hir'd to plead the cauſe;
A guardian to his clan he paſs'd his days,
The firſt in danger, but the laſt in eaſe.
His arm ſecur'd his people in the field,
The feeble reſted ſafe behind his ſhield;
Beneath his hand the weak did never fall;
The ſons of want found plenty in his hall;
The ſtranger there might uninvited come,
And taſte each comfort which he left at home:
Free to the traveller was the daily feaſt,
And the foe always periſh'd in the gueſt.
Thrice happy bards who ſung of chiefs like theſe!
Your works have always met deſerved praiſe;
The grateful ſons of Gael have nurs'd your fame,
And diſtant ages will rever your name:
Each eye ſhall ſoften at your lofty ſong,
Which ne'er ſhall ſink but with the Galic tongue *.

Not

* The Galic is the only name the Highlanders have for their own language. Their neighbours in the ſouth, however, have not been idle in inventing others, as *Iriſh* and *Erſe*. Even the Highlanders themſelves, when they talk of

Not ſo the guilty chief of modern days,
Unknown to virtue, and inur'd to eaſe;
He,

of it in the low countries, diſtinguiſh it by the appellation by which it is beſt underſtood there.

The Rev. Mr Whitaker, whoſe aſſertions I have formerly preſumed to combat, concludes this to be a ſufficient demonſtration that the Scots are of Iriſh extraction. As this affair is of ſome conſequence in a controverted point of hiſtory, the reader will not, perhaps, be diſpleaſed to ſee the authorities on which this reverend hiſtorian proceeds, examined. 'The Caledonians, who were reduced by the Scots of Er-in, or Ireland, having adopted the appellation of their conquerors; the nation and the country being now univerſally denominated Scots and Scotland; the nation being expreſsly denominated Hibernia, as late as the 11th century, and the people the Iriſchery, as late as the 14th, and their dialect of the Britiſh being *invariably* entitled the Ir-iſh, or Er-ſe, to the preſent moment.' *Whitaker's hiſt. page* 292.

So far is the language of the Highlands from 'being *invariably* entitled Ir-iſh, or Er-ſe,' at this, or any former period, that not one inſtance can be found of its having ever been termed by either of theſe names by the natives, until they come abroad, and learn it from ſtrangers. But this extract is ſupported by a quotation from a reſpectable author of the laſt century, and has the following note.

'Irwin in his hiſt. Scot. nomenclatura, 1682, p. 6. ſays, 'Our iſle-men and Highlanders are very oft named Hiberni

He, void of pity, hears the wretched moan,
And human nature give a gen'ral groan.—

With

berni by ſtrangers;—and, *at this day*, the Engliſh and our lowlanders call and count them Iriſh.'

When Mr Whitaker entered on the preſent controverſy with James Macpherſon, Eſq; he ſet out with profeſſions of candour, which could not fail of anticipating the favourable opinion of every reader of liberal ſentiments. His expreſſions are beautiful, and ſeem to bear the genuine marks of ſincerity.—'Diſdaining the little artifices of controverſy, too honourable, I hope, to create the faults that I cannot find, and too candid, I truſt, to urge ſtrongly the mere failings of humanity,' &c.

Can we imagine the author of ſentiments which do honour to human nature, capable of forgetting that reſpect due to himſelf, and proſtituting his ſuperior talents, by committing the moſt deſpicable piece of forgery that ever diſgraced the meaneſt controverſy. Candour and humanity forbid the ungenerous ſuſpicion; but juſtice calls aloud on the auſterity of truth, and confirms the fact.

From the following genuine quotation from the paſſage referred to, the reader will ſee what juſtice Mr Whitaker has done to his authority, and, from thence, may perceive what degree of credit is due to his moſt poſitive aſſertions. '*Albinenſis Scotia, et Albinenſes Scoti*, the country of *Albin*, and the *Scots* that poſſeſs it in Britain; For *Ireland* was never called *Scotia*, nor its inhabitants *Scoti-Hibernenſes*; though ſome *ſtrangers* have been over-eaſy to believe the monkiſh ridiculous fable of the Iriſh,

With grief he loads the wretched ſons of care,
And thouſands ſtarve that he may ſumptuous fare.
While I'm condemn'd to ſing of chiefs like theſe,
My works ſhall neither meet nor merit praiſe:
No

Iriſh, who affirm that *Ireland* was called *Scotia Major*, and they were called *Scoti Hiberneſes*. The ground of the miſtake was, That they thought both people might be as well called *Scots*, as (Gaelick) *Gaizi*. The truth is, the *Iriſh* are never called *Scots* in any authentic author. But our Iſle-men and Highlanders are very often named Hiberni by ſtrangers; both from their weſt ſituation, from their original, being come of the ſame *Gaelicks* in *Spain*, and from their language, and divers of their cuſtoms, all common with the Iriſh. And, at this day, the *Engliſh* and our *lowlanders*, call and count them *Iriſh*, for the foreſaid reaſons." *Erwin's hiſt. Scot. Nomencl.* p. 6.

From *faults* thus *created*, and from authorities thus perverted, does the reverend author conclude his *extended* remarks, in the loftieſt ſtrain of encomiums on his own abilities, that ever iſſued from a pen, elevated to an uncommon degree by the complimenting voice of ſelf-approbation. Had Mr Whitaker avoided all reference to the Celtic language, theſe eulogiums to his own talents had been leſs liable to cenſure. In other reſpects, he diſplays the ingenuity of a penetrating critic, and every where diſcovers an extenſive knowledge of antient hiſtory.

No bard ſhall ſound them on the trembling ſtring.
My words ſhall periſh, and the names I ſing.
In vain, alas! I tempt the lyric art,
With pointleſs words that reach not to the heart:
How ſhall I virtues which exiſt not, draw,
Or ſing of greatneſs which I never ſaw?
Weak are my words; for fate has caſt my birth
In the dull evening of the day of worth:
But ſtories tell that light did once prevail,
And the ſweet ſongs of bards confirm the tale;
Theſe ſay that nature ſmil'd with joy at noon,
When rays came darting from the glorious ſun:
But I too long in chaos did remain,
And now, alas! I trace his ſteps in vain;
Crouds who have ſeen him cry *the light divine*,
But tho' ſome eyes were bleſt, they were not mine;
Yon weſtern hill has ſnatch'd him from my ſight,
And my ſoul trembles at th' approach of night;
Concealing darkneſs ſpreads her awful gloom,
And muſic's words are haſt'ning to their tomb:
The language of the glens is left for death,
While jargon iſſues from the ſouth born breath;
The growling accents * form'd by rules of art,
Reach not the ſoul, nor pierce into the heart.

The

* The bard was provoked to pronounce this ſevere cenſure

The moon with Engliſh rhetoric in her train,
Strives to ſupplant the ſetting ſun in vain:

But

ſure on the Engliſh language, from the liberty with which a gentleman from the ſouth had once, in his preſence, treated the Gaſic. He aſſerted, that it was an unintelligible jargon, which ought not to be permitted in a civilized nation. This aſſertion was tranſlated to the bard, who gave his opinion of the Engliſh much in the ſame terms; and both parties continued to expreſs a hearty contempt for what neither of them underſtood.

This, it is hoped, would be a ſufficient apology for the auſterity of the bard, had not I myſelf been guilty of an equal piece of rudeneſs in the preceding notes; and frequently accuſed the Engliſh language of being incapable to admit a multiplicity of beauties contained in the originals of theſe poems. Therefore, before I conclude this volume, it is reaſonable I ſhould produce more particular inſtances in ſupport of theſe aſſertions. An examination of a paſſage, even of a modern compoſition, will illuſtrate this. It is taken from the works of a bard in the laſt century, when the office of bard and piper were united in one perſon.

'Sa mhadruinn aig èiridh le'r miolchoin,
Gu muineach, maiſeach, gaſda, gniomhach,
Lubach, leacach, glacach, ſgiamhach,
Carach, cabrach, enagach, ſiamhach.
'Nam da'n ghrèin dol air a huilinn,
Gu ſuilteach, rèubach, glèuſda, gunnach,

But feeble were her rays and dim she shone,
Equal in nought but bulk to him that's gone,
Yet absent brightness she insulting dares,
And thinks she's great among the twinkling stars:
These fled the presence of the fire of light,
Tho' now they blaze behind the queen of night.
So fled oppression once the glens of mirth,
When ev'ry day gave new-born pleasures birth.

Smail

Snapach, armach, calgach, ullamh,
Riachach, marbhach, tarbhach, giullach.

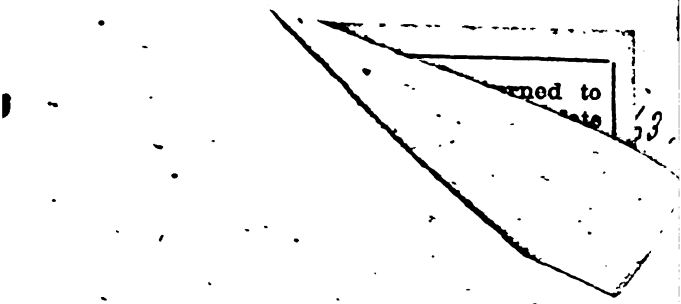
In the first paragraph, the bard describes a chief and his party going out to the hunting in the morning. This description is contained in twelve beautiful and comprehensive terms in the three last lines, not one of which can be literally translated. Each of them contains a complete piece of imagery, and would require a paragraph to express it in English.

Having sent them to the field with all the accomplishments which the most fertile fancy could suggest, or the most strenuous exertion of rhetoric express, he leaves the imagination to form to itself the actions of the day, and proceeds immediately to describe their return in the evening, with the spoils of the chace, 'when the sun leans on his elbow.' This is also done in twelve descriptive terms; the two first of which, representing the streaming blood and gaping wounds of the venison, may be translated literally; the rest are, like the other twelve, altogether inimitable.

Small was the tribute which the chieftain drew,
Yet many were his flocks, his wants were few;
His open table waited on the gueſt,
Nor faſted thouſands to provide the feaſt;
He liv'd not on the ſons of labour's ſpoil,
Themſelves enjoy'd the offspring of their toil,
His arm gave aid, his face did joy inſpire,
But never—never quench'd the peaſant's fire.
So rul'd the virtuous *Caledonian* ſage
In days which moderns term a barbarous age,
In ſelf-defence he drew the bloody dart;
No mercenary prieſt corrupt his heart.
Religious murder had not yet begun,
Nor ſuperſtition half mankind undone:
The gifts of nature to her ſons were free;
Thro' gratitude, not fear, man bent the knee.
Oh happy days! which will no more return;
Thy vaniſh'd brightneſs I'll with anguiſh mourn.
No more my harp ſhall tremble in the hall,
Since I have liv'd to ſee my country fall;
Her ſmoakleſs village and unpeopl'd glens,
Point out the tyranny which holds her reins;
The chief whoſe province 'twas to grant relief,
Is the black cauſe of every piercing grief.
Oh ſons of pride! what havock have you wrought!
What ruin on your wretched country brought!
You've

You've ſtab'd the boſom of a tott'ring ſtate,
And broke that ſword whoſe edge has made you great;
Forc'd *Albin's* ſons to quit their native land,
And ſeek protection from a ſavage band;
Driv'n by ſome chiefs of little ſoul from home,
To ſink in boiſt'rous waves, or find a tomb.
So when with flinty ſparks the fire of death
Blows the hot bullet from his ſmoaky breath,
The feeding ſtag comes tottering to the ground,
And echoing hills return the lofty ſound;
The painful ſtings begin to ſtop his breath,
His half-chew'd mouthful drops upon the heath;
The hated note alarms the ſwift-foot train,
Who ſtretch each nerve to gain the diſtent glen.
The many horned foreheads cleave the wind;
With rapid ſpeed the hills fly back behind.
So fly the ſons of *Gael* oppreſſion's rod,
So ſhun the paths that pale-fac'd tyrants trode.
Gone are our warriors, barren are our vales,
Yet I am left to tell theſe woeful tales;
To ſing of thoſe who under tyrants bend,
And mourn the evils which I cannot mend.

FINIS.



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